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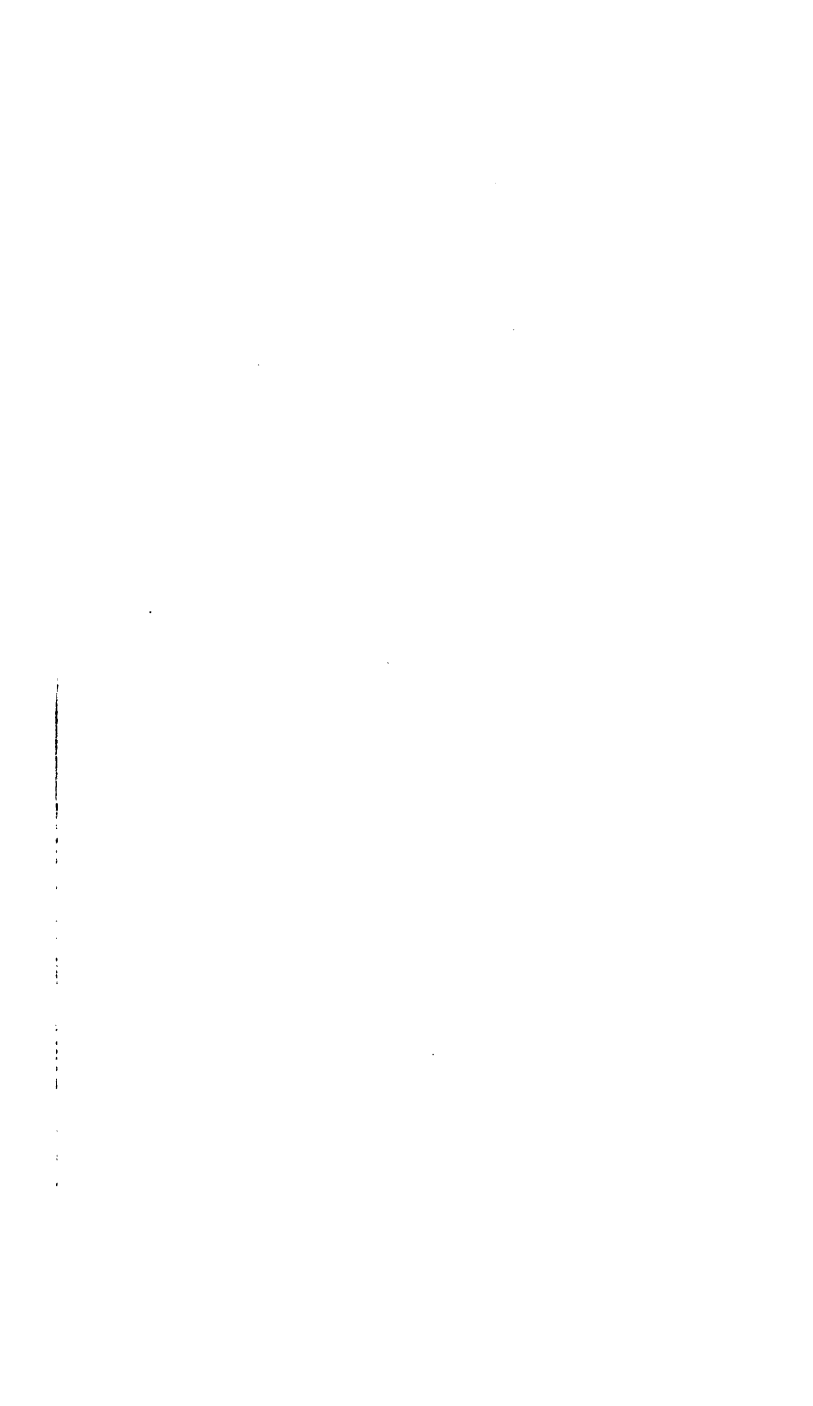
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EVELYN;

OR

A HEART UNMASKED.

A TALE OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

BY

ANNA CORA MOWATT,

AUTHOR OF "FASHION," A COMEDY; "THE FORTUNE HUNTER," ETC.

"Oh! that I thought it could be in a woman
To feed for age her lamp and flame of love,
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays."

TROLLUS AND CRESSIDA.

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EVELYN.

CHAPTER I.

"When the young bride goes from her father's hall,
She goes unto love yet untried and new;
She parts from love which hath still been true."

MRS. HEMANS.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

New York, May 2d, 18—.

It is just two months to-morrow since I arrived in New York. Lone, old body that I am, I have not quite lost my taste for social intercourse, nor my fondness for the study of human nature, which never so completely discards the cloak of conventionalism as in a stage-coach or a boarding-house. Partly to indulge these predilections, and partly for other motives, I took up my residence in a fashionable establishment in Broadway. "A *fashionable* boarding-house!" I hear you exclaim in surprise; "pray how are you to encounter fashionable expenses?" Do not be alarmed—my cupboard of a chamber, in the *fourth story*, (so called by courtesy), contains a narrow bed which is converted into a sofa in the daytime, and a small fancy screen that ornamentally shuts out one corner of the apartment, so that I am enabled to turn the bed-room into a *boudoir* at pleasure: the luxurious elegance of my accommodations will hardly ruin me!

As I took my place at the well-filled breakfast-table, the morning after my arrival, I was startled by the sound of a familiar voice; but the face of the speaker I could not immediately recognise. The person who had

attracted my attention sat opposite to me, and I had an excellent opportunity of scanning her features. She was a woman past her prime, but *bien conservé*. I think you would have pronounced her, if not decidedly handsome, at least very distinguished-looking. All that the potency of art could effect, in repairing her perishing charms, had been essayed. Nothing could be more studiously becoming than her morning costume—the *redingote* of dark silk, fitting closely to her expansive form—the snowy frill that concealed every trace of Time’s marring fingers upon her graceful throat—the half-demure, half-coquettish cap, with its neatly fluted border, which seemed contrived to set off just such a face—the sober, and at the same time, rich hue of the ribbons, that accorded so perfectly with the lady’s somewhat faded complexion—everything was in harmony, everything about her *told*, everything was in excellent taste. Then she sat with her back to the light, complaining of weak eyes that the blinds might be closed. There was something very winning about her manners, and she riveted the attention of the most indifferent person at will. Her perfect ease and independence would have degenerated into *forwardness*, had her actions been pervaded by less of grace and suavity. She spoke loudly and energetically, but then her voice was round and fine; and as she desired many listeners, it was necessary for her to make herself heard.

After gazing at her for some time, and so intently that I forgot the untasted omelet before me, I gradually remembered that altered face, and bending forward, timidly pronounced her name.

She looked at me inquiringly a moment, and then cordially exclaimed, “Miss Bolton! Kate! Can it be possible that it is you?”

I assured her of my identity, and she instantly addressed her husband, who sat at some distance, and said, “Mr. Willard, do you not remember Miss Bolton? Kate, have you forgotten Mr. Willard?”

Mr. Willard and I bowed to each other, and Mrs. Willard then presented her two daughters, who sat one

on each side of her. Ten years had elapsed since I last saw them, and ten years ago they were mere children. As I glanced at Ellen, the eldest, I could hardly repress an exclamation of pity. She was indeed an object to excite compassion. Her shoulders were high and round, and not even her mother's skill in dress could conceal the deep hollow on one side and the swelling on the other, formed by a curved spine. Delicate and small as were her features, the rest of her head was remarkably large, but beautifully proportioned, and adorned with a profuse mass of glossy brown hair simply parted on her brow. The air of sad meekness, that evinced itself not only upon her countenance but in all her movements, rendered even her misfortune attractive.

From the contemplation of the suffering Ellen, my eyes turned almost involuntarily to her sister, Evelyn. I should but show my own lack of power if I attempted to give you any adequate idea of her sparkling, flashing, varying beauty. True, I might tell you that new-blown roses on a bed of sunlit snow were hardly as brilliant or as rich as her complexion—that her long jetty lashes cast so deep a shadow over a pair of darkly blue eyes, that at times you would have declared those eyes were black—that the veil of shining hair, which fell in natural ringlets about her shoulders, in some lights was auburn, and in others the warmest and glossiest brown; and that where that hair parted on her forehead, it broke into those graceful waves which art cannot imitate—that her nose was almost Grecian; and her lips, although their outlines were fine, so full and pouting, that their expression, had it been less innocent, must have been voluptuous. I might add that her form was a shade taller and rounder than that of the Venus de Medicis, but not a shade less perfect—that she was as energetic as she was restless—that every word she uttered was as full of naïveté or feeling as every motion was replete with archness and grace—and yet you would hardly have a faint conception of the

“Charms that varied as they beamed.”

But I have given you no description of Mr. Willard ; and it was my intention to bring all my friends before your mind's eye that you might be more interested in their history. As far as I can judge of ages, Mr. Willard must be about forty. Picture to yourself a taciturn individual, who never speaks anything beyond a common-place, and yet delivers his remarks with as much impressive gravity as though he considered every sentence an aphorism. In person tall and gaunt, with arms and legs which are a dreadful incumbrance to him, for he never knows what to do with them—a thin and sallow face, but features too heavy to be sharp, in spite of the projecting cheek-bones and hollow cheeks—small, round, grey eyes—overhanging brows furnished with a goodly quantity of bristly reddish hair—a consumptive pair of whiskers of deep auburn hue, curtailed in an even line from the mouth—a low and deeply-furrowed forehead—thin, compressed lips, through which the shape of horse-like teeth is partially visible—an habitual frown, that denotes calculation, care and disappointment—picture all these, and you will see Mr. Willard, with folded arms and a very absorbed mien, sitting before you.

Let me return to my first interview with Mrs. Willard. After breakfast she invited me into her own drawing-room, and we spent several hours in talking over by-gone days. Since then, either because she has had the discernment to discover some congenial qualities in me, or because she finds that I can be of service to her, we have become very intimate. I am almost as indispensable an appendage to her parlour as the sofa or the rocking-chair ; and am made quite as much use of—but to that I have no objection. Mrs. Willard has a vast number of acquaintances, many of them fashionable persons, and so she had ten years ago ; for she possesses a faculty of forcing herself into society to which she has no apparent claim, and of making herself welcome to persons whose acquaintance is considered an honour.

(Her husband is a Wall-street broker, but as he never

had anything to lose—not even *credit*—the most ruinous speculations cannot harm him. I remember the family ten years ago, when they lived in apparent style; but were in reality making a desperate effort to *keep up appearances*, and clothe the skeleton poverty in purple and gold. They were in the habit of taking a large house and furnishing but one room, which was the *show room*, or *company room*. The rest of their dwelling was destitute even of common comforts; but few ever saw behind the scenes. As the rent of the house never made a part of their domestic expenses, they generally moved every six months. As for servants, a new set was engaged every few days, who found their home too uncomfortable to remain a week at the longest, and were glad enough to quit the field without their wages. On one or two occasions, to be sure, a shrewd domestic would pay himself by purloining a few silver spoons; but Mrs. Willard was too watchful for this disaster to occur frequently.

The manner in which Mrs. Willard gratified her taste for expensive dress is worth mentioning. As soon as she ran up a large bill in one store she withdrew her valuable patronage from that establishment, and commenced an account with another. These accounts, as you may suppose, she expected to cancel—at *doomsday*; but the Willards moved about so frequently that their duns had some difficulty in finding them—and when found, the search was only a loss to the seeker. As Mr. Willard had by no means the same tact in procuring himself attire which his wife possessed, he was generally very shabbily dressed, while her toilet was always costly and elegant.

For about sixteen years or more, they lived in the manner I have described—that is, *lived* without anything to *live upon*. At last their furniture—the furniture of their *company room*—which had been very often threatened, was seized by the sheriff, and actually removed from the house.

“What *shall* we do!” exclaimed Mr. Willard despondingly. “This is ruin indeed!”

“Not so;” replied his philosophic wife. “All is for the best, my dear; Evelyn will soon be sixteen; it is time to think of an establishment for her. There is no place in which one can get acquainted with rich young men so well as in a fashionable boarding-house—there, it is not necessary for them to take the trouble to call upon you—they see you morning and night in a natural way—and lose their hearts before they have time to guard them. We must take board, my dear, in some desirable location; you can inquire before-hand what young men there are in the house, and before quarter-day comes round Evelyn will be married; and of course her husband will act—*like a gentleman.*”

There was no appeal from Mrs. Willard’s decisions—board was taken at the very house in which I accidentally engaged my little room. The Willards have been here three months; and the sagacious mother finds that she has made a wise and correct calculation. Evelyn’s striking beauty and fascination could not fail to attract. Before she had been a fortnight in the house half the young men were at her feet. Mrs. Willard immediately selected the one whom she supposed would make the most eligible husband for her daughter, and summoned all her skill into play in developing and strengthening the young gentleman’s growing attachment. But how do you suppose she accomplished this desired object? By luring him into her own parlour and giving him continual access to her daughter’s society, and by openly encouraging his attentions? Quite the contrary. Mr. Merritt (for that is his name), was the person, of all others, to whom she paid the least attention, and was least agreeable. When she saw him engaged in an animated conversation with her daughter, she invariably interrupted him by calling Evelyn away—when the family attended the theatre he was never requested to join their party—and he was the very last gentleman in the house whom Mrs. Willard had the courtesy to invite into her private parlour.

Mr. Merritt was piqued at this apparent neglect. Every obstacle that impeded his free intercourse with

Evelyn only rendered him more desirous of beholding her—more impatient at the continual restraint to which he was subjected. Under ordinary circumstances he would have taken a year to woo, but under these, six weeks seemed an eternity. At the end of that period he offered himself, and his suit was by no means instantly received by the parents—they talked of Evelyn's youth—of their disinclination to part with her, and advised Mr. Merritt to wait a few years. Mr. Merritt became highly excited, declared that he could not accede to their wishes, that he desired to be married immediately, and that he should be miserable until the beautiful Evelyn was his wife. The tender parents, especially the mother, were greatly moved by his agitation, and finally consented that the young couple should be united in six weeks more; although they professed to think the union very hasty and rather imprudent.

There are persons in the house, some few cold and calculating persons, who pronounce all the imprudence to be on the side of Mr. Merritt. He is a young man, not more than twenty-five years of age—a merchant, already established in a prosperous business, and master of a moderately large capital. His figure is good, and his face not exactly handsome but pleasing and intelligent. I have not had much opportunity of reading his character, yet I observe that he is sincere and generous in the extreme; is passionately enamoured of Evelyn, but inclined to jealousy, and peculiarly sensitive to the world's opinion. He would not infringe the rules of etiquette to gratify the dearest wish of his heart—he entertains the greatest horror of *doing anything different from other people*—expressing a sentiment which would not be generally approved—or even wearing a coat or cravat which is not sanctioned by the present usages of society. The public is to him a mighty bugbear; at its shrine he trembles and bows, and lives in perpetual fear of incurring the wrath of the Deity. Deeply as he loves Evelyn, had Mrs. Willard managed her schemes terously, had he found leisure to reflect, dent inquiries concerning Mr.

Willard's standing in society, all Mr. Merritt's enthusiastic idolatry of the beautiful girl would have been insufficient to induce him to make her his wife.

As for Evelyn, I cannot say that she returns his affection, although she likes him very well, is flattered by his attentions, and willing to become the mistress of his house by first becoming his wife. The seal upon her virgin heart has never yet been broken; yet I am sure that heart is a mine of passion—passion sparkles in her eyes; breathes upon her lips; speaks in every word—an undefined tenderness pervades all her actions and extends itself almost without discrimination to every being that comes within her sphere. In the words of Taylor—

“ Her objectless affections spread;
Not wholly unemployed, but squandered
At large where'er her fancy wandered.”

It is therefore that I dread to see those affections concentrated, unless they centre upon her husband. As yet I am sure she has never loved—but then she is only sixteen!

A few days ago, as she seated herself with the careless grace of a child at my feet, and fondly turned her magnificent eyes to mine, I ventured to say to her “Evelyn, you will soon become a wife: do you think you will be happy?”

“Happy!” she replied gayly; “and why not?”

“Do you love Mr. Merritt?”

“To be sure; do not you?”

“If you truly loved him, you would hardly ask that question of another.”

“Perhaps not, but still I like him as well as I like any body I ever saw.”

“And you think you will be happy?”

“Happy as the day is long. Does not mother say so?”

I did not, for I could not, reply; but as I looked her bright face I inwardly offered up a prayer that might never be shadowed by the struggles of a sinking heart, or the pangs of a rebuking conscience

Yesterday was the bridal morning—a beautiful morning it was—all nature seemed to smile upon the nuptials, and the sunshine within reflected the sunshine without. Evelyn danced about like a gleeful child, perfectly unimpressed by the solemnity of the vows she was about to make. Mrs. Willard was *fluttered* and agitated—so busy that she did not know which way to turn; and so delighted that she could do nothing at all. The father spent half the morning in brushing the oft-scoured coat, coaxing his meagre hair and whiskers to remain where he placed them, and surveying his own smiling face in the mirror. Ellen looked less sad than usual, and as none of the others had their wits about them, made herself very useful.

The ceremony was to take place in St. Mark's church at two o'clock. And the bride and groom, after returning with their friends to the house and partaking of a splendid collation, were to leave the city and make the fashionable tour; spending a few days at Niagara, and a few more at the Springs.

At about ten o'clock Mrs. Willard and Ellen commenced to dress Evelyn, and, as you may suppose, I was called in to assist at her toilette. At first she would hardly remain quiet a single moment—a magnificent set of diamonds, the gift of her bridegroom, occupied her whole attention. She fastened the necklace around her slender throat, clasped the bracelets on her fair arms, placed the splendid tiara upon her head—the glittering star, which formed a brooch, upon her bosom, and the diamond guard on her delicate finger; then flew to the glass and gambolled before it until our eyes were dazzled by the rainbow lights which such a galaxy of diamonds emitted at every movement.

After a while she submitted herself to my care, and I commenced arraying her in her bridal robes. Her shining tresses soon fell in ringlets about her white shoulders, shadowed by the sweeping veil of Mechlin lace; once more the diamonds were clasped about her young brow
 swelling bosom; her
 dress only was n
 her toilette.

"Come and assist me, Kate," said Mrs. Willard. "Evelyn had better remain in her wrapper for half an hour longer."

Evelyn consented to this proposition, and I left her to busy myself in setting off the charms of Mrs. Willard. For nearly a quarter of an hour the bride was forgotten. As I neither saw nor heard her, I presumed she had left the room. But, turning round to search for a stray ribbon, I beheld Evelyn seated upon a low stool, leaning her forehead against the wall—her arms hanging motionless beside her, the pupils of her large eyes strangely dilated as she gazed upon some fearful object in the distance. I thought I had never beheld her cheek so pale, nor her countenance so full of mingled grief and horror. Alarmed at her position and air, I ran up to her and pronounced her name; but she moved not—she did not hear me. I placed my hand upon her shoulder—it was very cold, and she started and trembled at my touch.

"Dear Evelyn," said I, "what is the matter?"

She pointed to a large mirror opposite, and replied in a voice that sounded hoarse and unnatural to my ears, "look there!"

I looked and beheld her own form reflected, and told her that I did so.

"I saw my own form too—but not as it looks now," she answered shuddering, and still gazing in the glass. "It was worn and emaciated and covered with rags, and——"

"Wake up, foolish girl, you are dreaming! Come, your bridegroom is waiting."

She sprang up at these words and said, "So I *was* dreaming! Do you know that I always have strange dreams, and that they always forebode something?"

"Yes; and I know, too, that wise old women always interpret dreams by *contraries*; therefore your's is a good one."

"So it is—so it is! Give me my dress—how these diamonds sparkle! What a blaze of light! Come, dress me!"

We obeyed her commands, and she was soon attired for the altar. Had my advice availed, her toilette would have been perfectly simple, that her youth and beauty might have showed forth more conspicuously; but her mother insisted that every article of dress which Evelyn wore should be as costly as money (or rather the promise of money) could purchase. And she really looked—I was about to say like an *angel*—but *houri* would be the more appropriate word; for, if there was anything *angelic* about her, it belonged to the warm sense-stirring beauty of the Mahometan's Paradise, rather than the pure and holy loveliness of the Christian's Heaven. The brilliant hue that usually mantled her cheeks had returned to them, and the careless smile to her lips, and the warm glow to her light heart. Everybody shared her happiness but myself—I could not forget the appalling expression that, but a few minutes ago, had left its frightful impress on her countenance.

“The bridesmaids are ready, and Mr. Merritt is waiting,” said Ellen, as she entered the chamber.

“Let me see my bridesmaids first,” replied Evelyn.

They were admitted and clasped in the warm embrace of the beauteous bride. The first bridesmaid, Laura Hilson, was a young lady with whom Evelyn had become acquainted in the house where we are boarding. She is a tall, stylish-looking girl, dark browed, with strongly-marked, but fine features, and a very lady-like deportment. Amy Elwell, the second, has long been one of Evelyn's most intimate friends. She is *picturesque-looking*, rather than *pretty*—her countenance is sweet and gentle, but too placid for my taste; and her manners appear to me reserved and cold; yet Evelyn loves her tenderly, and declares that the attachment is fully reciprocated.

I was summoned from the chamber to complete my own preparations, and therefore did not witness Evelyn's meeting with Mr. Merritt.

The next time I beheld the bride and bridegroom, they had just alighted from their carriage, and were ascending the church steps. They entered, walked

slowly down the long aisle, followed by the numerous bridal party, and ranged themselves in front of the chancel. The clergyman rose, and the ceremony commenced. If you have ever read the Episcopalian bridal service, you know how thrillingly impressive is every line—especially when the ceremony is performed in church, where the echoes give back the minister's and the bride's and the bridegroom's words, and no other sounds are heard. You will think me a nervous creature, but when the clergyman demanded if Evelyn would take Walter for her husband, and would cling to him until death parted them, a cold shudder ran through my frame. The minister bent forward to catch Evelyn's response, for no reply was audible—she did not bow her head, neither did her lips move. I stood where I could see her face, and the same expression passed over her blanched countenance which had once before terrified me that morning. The question was repeated—instantly Evelyn looked up, smiled brightly, and replied in a loud and clear voice, "I will."

How the ceremony proceeded and concluded I cannot say; for I neither saw nor heard anything more—I felt faint, and was forced to sit down. Before long I was aroused by persons moving around me—Evelyn was a wife, and receiving the congratulations of thronging friends; but before I could approach her, she was led back to the carriage by her enchanted husband.

I was too much fatigued and indisposed to be present at the collation, but I heard that Evelyn was the gayest of the gay; that Mr. Merritt looked like the personification of human happiness; that Mrs. Willard expressed her delight at every other word, and Mr. Willard could not find language for his; and that all the company pronounced the wedding one of the merriest they had ever witnessed.

Evelyn and her husband started for Niagara in the afternoon; and Mrs. Willard forced me out of bed that I might spend the evening in her parlour and listen to her plans, and re-echo her hopes, and sympathize in her happiness. All this I did; and when you reflect

it gave me a severe headache from which I have been
 suffering to-day
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*Cita
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g.

From the Same to the Same.

June 1st.

WE had the happiness of welcoming back Evelyn and her husband after a fortnight's absence. There was no visible change in the lovely bride; she was as vivacious, as frank, as thoughtless, and as brilliant as ever. As for Mr. Merritt, who is really an agreeable and remarkably well-bred young man, I never liked him half so well as now. They have taken a handsome suite of apartments, and are to remain here.

"Man's character," says some philosopher, "is perfected through trial." Mr. Merritt's, therefore, is in a fair way of becoming faultless. The first evening after his return, when he entered the parlour, he found Evelyn sitting upon the sofa, and beside her a young man who was familiarly amusing himself by tangling the spools of cotton and skins of silk which filled her work-basket.

The young man rose when Mr. Merritt made his appearance, upset the basket, and awkwardly yet boldly walked up to him.

"Walter, permit me to introduce to you my—my—" stammered Evelyn, blushing.

"What's the matter with you, Evy? Why can't you speak out like a woman?" said the stranger roughly, making a vain endeavour to free his thumbs from the floss silk twisted about them.

"My brother Richard," continued Evelyn, concluding her sentence with less confusion.

“Or Dick, if you like that better, Dick at your service, sir,” added Mr. Willard, bowing repeatedly and smiling at every bow.

Well might Mr. Merritt have gazed at this individual in astonishment. The person who stood before him was about six feet high, with a loosely knit and spindling frame, surmounted by a small apple-shaped head. He wore a coat so much too large for him, that it must have been constructed for a friend, in whose service it had seen its best days—the rest of his costume was in the same style, except that his shirt, being totally invisible, its existence might be doubted.

This Richard Willard, or *Dick*, as he chooses to call himself, is really a curious creature—one of nature’s *oddities* rendered more odd by circumstance. He is naturally bashful in the extreme, but conceals his *mauvaise honte* by an assumption of boldness and bluntness, which often amounts to positive impudence. He generally walks through the streets with his head hanging down, but inclined a little to one side, and with one eye half closed, which gives him at the same time a sheepish and a knowing look. He calls himself a lawyer, but with a lawyer’s fees it is not likely that he ever became acquainted. He never has a sixpence in his pocket, unless he happens to borrow one from a good-natured friend, who is willing to pay for getting rid of him. As he cannot make a “*suitable appearance*,” he never lives with the rest of the family. Where he hides himself I cannot imagine, but like the owl he generally ventures out at night.

His skilful mother contrives to supply him with clothes, which he pawns for one-third of their value almost as soon as he receives them. He carries his whole wardrobe on his back, anything extra would immediately be transported to the “three balls” and converted into silver, or even copper. Yet he is proud—proud of his family and of himself—of his birth, education, and natural endowments—he thinks himself “equal to anybody,” and sees no reason why he may not one day become President of the United States

Were it not for his bashfulness, he would annoy his family very frequently, but the dread of meeting strangers keeps him at a distance. He is not intemperate, nor does he gamble, nor is he addicted to any *gentlemanly* vice in particular.

You may easily conceive the bewilderment of Mr. Merritt, the fastidious, refined, polished man of taste, who has a perfect horror of anything *outré*, when this gentleman was presented to him as his wife's brother!

The Willards are a *nervous* family—constitutionally nervous—but the nervousness of every one of them takes a different shape in accordance with his or her disposition. When one of these unfortunate fits of nervousness seizes Richard, he trembles, twists his fingers, and makes the most hideous and ludicrous grimaces. And it was under the influence of this enemy that he stood before Mr. Merritt at their first interview. Mr. Merritt, who seldom forgets the duties of a host, after the first moment of surprise, begged that Mr. Willard would take a seat. Mr. Willard knocked over a chair in attempting to do so, and was on the point of upsetting a china inkstand when Evelyn's quick hand prevented the disaster.

"I wish you would be more thoughtful, Dick," said Evelyn playfully.

"Thoughtful, Evy! Why there's not a man in the United States thinks more than myself—I'm always thinking. There's your husband and,—Walter, as you call him, ask Walter if I don't look like a thinking character." Mr. Willard in spite of his glowing cheeks, and the nervous twitchings of his mouth, delivered these words in a loud tone and confidently looked at Mr. Merritt for a reply.

Mr. Merritt merely bowed.

"Walter, my fine fellow," continued Mr. Willard, "there's no use of ceremony between such near relations;—you call me Dick and I'll call you Walter—that will be quite fair and right—I say, Walter, don't you think that Evy and I look alike?"

"I cannot say that I find much resemblance, Mr. Willard," answered Mr. Merritt, shuddering slightly.

"Well now, everybody thinks we are remarkably like. But I have grown thin lately, and Evy has grown fat."

"Oh, Richard, you had better not call me fat before Walter; he detests fat people."

"Well, *fleshy* then, very *fleshy*; don't you think Evy fleshy?" continued Mr. Willard, who began to grow timid about pronouncing his formal and formidable brother-in-law's name.

"No sir, I have never thought Mrs. Merritt inclined to *em bon point*."

"No! Well that's queer; and you don't think us alike? As for me, I—I——" Mr. Willard's mouth began to twitch so unpleasantly that he could not proceed; his chair felt uncomfortable to him; he rose, and walking towards the glass, made a comb of his fingers and began arranging his disordered hair. Neither Mr. Merritt nor Evelyn spoke. The silence was broken by Richard, who asked, as he complacently surveyed his features in the mirror, "how do you think I look, Evy? Looking well, am I not? Quite well, I think, in spite of my *rather sedentary habits*."

Evelyn laughed and answered, "Oh! you were always a beauty, Richard."

"Now don't call me Richard, or I'll think you are making fun—I prefer Dick—it sounds independent, and there's not such another independent fellow alive as myself."

The doors opened and several visitors were announced. Evelyn received them with her usual child-like grace, and would have presented her brother, had not Mr. Willard foreseen her intention and immediately commenced an animated conversation with his friends.

Mr. Willard ensconced himself in a corner and remained there until the guests were seated, then suddenly coming forward, he walked up to Evelyn, and said "Evy, I'm off; you must make Walter take care of you—I'll look in again to see how you're getting

along, and whether I can be of any service to you; married folks want a counsellor sometimes — all in my line you know.”

Evelyn's visitors looked up in astonishment at this familiar address, and a solemn silence ensued, during which Richard ran about the room looking under the tables and chairs for his hat. At last he found one which he supposed was his, but, as he was walking away, a gentleman politely accosted him.

“Excuse me sir, but I believe you have made a mistake: that hat is mine.”

“Yours, sir, you don't say so? Well that's queer—take it sir, I'm glad you didn't stand on ceremony.”

“Here is your hat sir,” said Mr. Merritt, attempting to conceal Mr. Willard's shabby-looking head-covering from the company while he handed it to him.

Mr. Willard took it, flourished the dilapidated article in the air as he made a bow, and endeavored to retreat toward the door walking backwards, but unluckily his foot became entangled in the shawl of one of the ladies which was carelessly trailing on the ground. Evelyn sprang forward to render her assistance; but her brother, not knowing what he was doing, and anxious to escape, caught hold of the shawl, and making a furious effort to free himself, carried away a large piece of the fringe which had fastened itself to a nail in his roughly made boot. He was too unconscious of his own act to apologize, and after a volley of mingled bows, smiles and grimaces, made his exit.

The lady whose shawl had received this damage could not conceal her vexation — the whole company were thrown into confusion, Mr. Merritt was vexed and Evelyn grieved. After remaining a few minutes longer, the visitors took their leave.

“I never heard that you had a brother, Evelyn,” said Mr. Merritt, seating himself beside his lovely wife as soon as they were alone.

“Oh! yes you have; but you have forgotten it. Richard is so bashful that he never lives with us; and

nobody thought to invite him to the wedding, for we knew he would not come."

As Evelyn uttered these words, Mrs. Willard entered the room with a troubled countenance.

"Evelyn, my love, go to your sister; I have a few words to say to Mr. Merritt."

Evelyn flew out of the room and came to tell me what had occurred; for she is an artless open-hearted creature, and cannot exist without a confidante to whom she can communicate every thought, hope and intention. In about an hour Mrs. Willard joined us, her eyes looking bright and her cheeks flushed. The expression of her countenance was at once triumphant and anxious.

We talked on indifferent subjects till Evelyn bade us good night, and then Mrs. Willard turned to me, caught hold of both my hands, and said, "I have succeeded, Kate! I have succeeded!"

"Succeeded in what?" I asked in surprise.

"Succeeded in extracting from Mr. Merritt a sufficient sum to pay the board bill. It was like drawing teeth, I can tell you. He seemed very disinclined to part with the money until I told him that Mr. Fleecer would make the matter public if he was not paid at once; and that it would injure Walter himself and Evelyn, besides distressing us all so dreadfully. Then I told him that I had informed Fleecer that it was impossible for Mr. Willard to pay the amount due, just at present, but that I intended to apply for assistance to Mr. Merritt. I added that Fleecer, knowing this fact, when he found that our own son-in-law refused to aid us, would not keep the affair to himself.

"After that I assured Walter that Mr. Willard would give his note for the money endorsed by his son Richard, and that there was no possible risk. Walter is a generous fellow—when he heard this, he did not make many objections to giving me a check for the money. He would do anything rather than be talked about, or have his wife's family made the subject of discussion—an excellent point—you see I know how to choose a son-in-law!"

“And to manage him after he is chosen,” I replied.

Mrs. Willard nodded her head significantly, and answered, “Ah! my dear, we only live in this world to learn how to get through life in the best and most comfortable manner—it is a study worthy the wisest of us, and I confess myself an apt student.” With these words she took up her candle and retired.

You will wonder, dear Elizabeth, at Mrs. Willard’s communicativeness, and so do I myself. I think I may conscientiously say that I never *sought* her confidence; therefore, I must have won it by the undisguised interest which I take in her family. If you knew Evelyn, you would easily trace the source from which that interest springs—it is impossible to be acquainted with that lovely creature without being fascinated. Everything connected with her has become endeared to me; and it is through her medium alone that her mother approaches my heart.

I do not think that Evelyn is aware of her mother’s manœuvres, and she unconsciously plays into Mrs. Willard’s hands. Since Evelyn’s marriage, her husband has placed large sums of money at her disposal; for it is his pride to see her elegantly attired. But Evelyn, instead of expending this money upon herself, is continually making costly presents to her mother and sister. She uses her husband’s purse as though, like Peter Schmehil’s, it was inexhaustible.

Mrs. Willard, while she profits by Evelyn’s gifts, seems to me sometimes almost to regret that she has no longer any occasion to show her skill in making an old and worn-out article of dress look like a new one. She is unrivalled in her talents for turning and cleansing silk, dying scarfs, cleaning gloves, washing ribbons and laces, &c. She delights in making a bargain, buying damaged goods at a cheap rate, and making all her purchases on credit. I have seen her several times seriously annoyed and even vexed, when Evelyn, without attempting to beat down the shopkeeper who was serving her, drew forth the money for some article that struck her fancy, and ordered it to be sent home.

“Evelyn does not know how to manage!” would her mother whisper to me. “It is such a pity; but I never could teach her—I would have bought those goods and not paid half that sum for them.”

A few days after Mrs. Willard’s conversation with Mr. Merritt respecting the board-bill, we were just returning from breakfast, when Evelyn (who since her marriage is furnished with a private table) ran into her mother’s parlour, exclaiming, “Mother! mother! Do you know Walter says that we are going to housekeeping. He intends to purchase one of those beautiful houses in Union Square. But what shall I do without you? I asked him if you, and Ellen, and father, were not to live with us, and he frowned and said that he had not married the whole family.”

Mrs. Willard’s countenance was perfectly calm, as she answered, “He was right, my love. Do not trouble yourself—you will see us very often; and it is not respectable for a man of Mr. Merritt’s wealth to board all his life.”

Evelyn was summoned to her dress-maker, and Mr. Willard, who had heard the remarks of his wife and daughter, rose up and said despairingly, “What is to become of us now, I wonder! When Mr. Merritt leaves the house, who will keep that merciless Fleecer in order! In less than a month, he will let us know that he cannot accommodate us with rooms any longer. He was always an unaccommodating fellow. Heaven preserve us!”

“Do not worry yourself,” replied Mrs. Willard, composedly. “I am not in the least alarmed. I am delighted that Mr. Merritt is going to housekeeping—leave everything to me.”

The confident tone in which Mrs. Willard spoke, reassured her husband. He knew that she had some scheme in her head—and *that* was sufficient—what that scheme was could be of no especial importance to him—if once conceived by her, its execution was insured.

I should much regret the loss of Evelyn’s society, did I not think it to her advantage to be removed from the

influence of Laura Hilson. You remember I mentioned that this Miss Hilson was one of Evelyn's bridesmaids, and that she was residing in the house with us. I have taken an uncontrollable, and perhaps unwarrantable dislike to her. She professes to be Evelyn's bosom friend, and possesses that sort of influence over her which a strong mind may always exert over a weaker one. I sometimes think she is an enemy at heart. When Evelyn is admired, Laura's dark eyes flash with ill-concealed envy; she will herself join in the conversation, and bestow the most extravagant praises upon the very errors of her friend, with the view of rendering those errors more conspicuous.

Once or twice, when Mr. Merritt was leaning over the back of Evelyn's chair, and with lover-like devotion listening to her lively discourse, I have watched Laura's cheek flush as she regarded them; and once, when I sat beside her, I caught the sound of her teeth as she ground them together. Does this portend nothing?

It is not at all improbable that Miss Hilson entertains feelings of animosity towards the unsuspecting Evelyn. I have heard that before the Willards came to the house Mr. Merritt was supposed to be paying his addresses to Miss Laura herself, and that she received them with encouraging graciousness.

She is the daughter of a widow lady—a boisterous, red-faced old woman, like the Willards “steeped in poverty up to the teeth,” and, like them, residing in a fashionable boarding-house for the sake of disposing of her daughter. The mother appears to me a vulgar, inoffensive woman; but from the eyes of the daughter I have too often seen a revengeful spirit look threateningly forth, not to suspect her. Heaven shield Evelyn from this pretended friend—I would much rather she was an open enemy!

CHAPTER III.

“Heaven knows with what delight I saw your loves!”

COLERIDGE.

From the Same to the Same.

November 1st.

To have written to you while you were travelling, dearest Elizabeth, would have been to waste good ink and less valuable ideas, for my letters, in all probability, would not have reached you. And now I hasten to comply with the request in your last kind epistle, which is lying before me, and give you a rapid sketch of the six months, during which I have been silent.

I am still *vegetating* in my “*bed-room boudoir*” at Fleecer’s—still living only in the existence of others—still a meditative, though not always *silent*, looker-on in the world—as fond as ever of the quietude of my own chamber—my little rose-wood secretary, and the constant friends of my solitude, my cherished *goose-quill*—for I abominate your steel pens.

So much for myself—and now for the friends who have more active parts to play on this great stage upon which I am only a supernumerary—the star Evelyn and her satellite relatives. Just six months ago the beautiful Evelyn was placed at the head of a splendid establishment, and surrounded by all the glittering paraphernalia of wealth. Mr. Merritt purchased a very elegant house, situated directly opposite Union Park, one of the most delightful locations in the city. Mr. and Mrs. Willard and Ellen still remained quietly at Fleecer’s—where there was, however, no prospect of their remaining *in quiet* long.

You would naturally suppose that Evelyn, when she became the mistress of a sumptuously furnished house, with a train of servants at her command, a well filled purse in her hand, and an adoring husband ever by her

side, must have been comfortable if not contented. But the light-hearted child—for child she is—had difficulties to encounter for which she was wholly unprepared. She had a house, and the house must be kept—but of *house-keeping* she was as ignorant as poets proverbially are of book-keeping. She had servants, and they must be directed, but she was better calculated to enact Victoria and govern a kingdom than to superintend their movements. Her purse was full and she certainly possessed a faculty of making its contents vanish, for they disappeared as though by a magician's "*presto.*" Then she had a husband who adored her, but whose adoration, although not of an evanescent nature, did not prevent him from discovering that his idol was made to be worshipped only, for its uses were few.

It was surprising that such an excellent *amateur* manager and notable housewife, as Mrs. Willard, should have neglected to instruct her daughters in the necessary art and accomplishment of domestic management. Could she have been influenced by a spirit of calculation in permitting this culpable neglect? Charity forbids me to answer the question, even to myself.

I have told you that Mr. Merritt possesses a highly refined and morbid mind which cannot stoop to occupy itself with the common affairs of life. He grew dissatisfied at the waste and mismanagement; but Evelyn, totally unconscious that anything was wrong, prattled away, and laughed at his gloomy looks, and forced him to smile in spite of himself.

Strange to say, her mother sedulously avoided aiding or advising her, except in the presence of Mr. Merritt; and then her instructions and admonitions were endless.

One day, about a month after Evelyn first took possession of her new dwelling, Mr. and Mrs. Willard and I were spending the afternoon with Evelyn. I observed that Mr. Merritt was particularly grave. It appears that he had invited a few friends to dine with him on the day previous, and the dinner prepared for them was indeed a remarkable one. Then, the wine had been shaken by the rough handling of servants—a large por-

tion of the costly dinner service having met with a disastrous fate, the white earthen ware used in the kitchen was at the third course unceremoniously substituted for the richly ornamented china. The lamps burnt dimly, and now and then one flickering light went out. All the arrangements were thoroughly inelegant, and everything was uncomfortable. Yet of these little *contre temps* Evelyn did not appear to take the slightest notice, nor did she ever imagine herself responsible for them. She was as joyous as ever, and the contrast of her gaiety only made Mr. Merritt's seriousness more obvious.

When his friends took their leave, and he attempted to reason with his young and lively wife, she answered with great good humour that she had not noticed anything wrong—that the dinner was nice enough for anybody—that she did not remember seeing the white earthen plates—that really she had never trimmed a lamp in her life, and did not know how it should be done—that her husband was fanciful—and that he must not, he *really* must not, look so grave, or he would grieve her. And so, I suppose, he gave the smile for which she petitioned, and forgot for the moment his mortification and discontent.

On the next day his dissatisfaction returned, or was called forth anew by some new carelessness; be this as it may, when we all assembled in the parlor just before tea, he certainly looked sad.

Evelyn seated herself at Mrs. Willard's feet with her arms gracefully folded on her mother's knees, and her brilliant eyes bent lovingly upon her face; her husband kept gloomily aloof.

The minutest circumstance never escapes Mrs. Willard's attention; and I am sure that she read her son-in-law's thoughts, although she made no allusion to his unusual gravity.

During a momentary silence, I observed her looking around the room with an expression which denoted regret and anxiety. She was obviously examining the elegant furniture, which already began to look dingy

and worn. Mr. Merritt's eyes followed hers, but he did not speak. At length Mrs. Willard suddenly rose, and glancing at the mantel-piece, shook her finger playfully, yet rebukingly, at Evelyn, and said—

“Look at these stains, child: your beautiful marble mantel is already disfigured!”

“Is it?” cried Evelyn, springing up. “Why so it is—what a pity! But it can't be helped.”

“Yes, but it can,” returned Mrs. Willard; “these are the stains of hot tumblers.”

“It must be the whiskey-punch that Walter's friends were drinking the other night,” replied Evelyn unconcernedly. “I suppose the glasses were placed on the mantel—but no matter.”

“But, my dear Evelyn, it is *much* matter. You should not permit such carelessness; you must direct your servants to mix a tea-spoonful of oxalic acid with a cup of water, and wash this marble with it; that will remove the stains; but the mixture is poisonous, so tell them to be careful—remember, *one tea-spoonful to one cupfull*”

“So I will; and look at this elegant mahogany table—it is all covered with large spots.”

“It was new a month ago, and cost me fifty dollars,” remarked Mr. Merritt with increasing gravity.

“Let me see—is it varnished?” said Mrs. Willard, examining the table. “Yes—you should not dine upon a varnished table. Order your waiter to rub it well with lamp-oil, and afterwards with alcohol. And this grey marble hearth—how badly it looks! It must be polished with beeswax and turpentine, or rubbed with linseed oil. I observe, too, there are spots of oil on the new Brussels carpet—they should be taken out with *fuller's earth*: and you want *British lustre* to cleanse this hearth-pan. The stains of soiled fingers on those white walls, too, should be removed with soft water and soap-suds, in which a lump of soda has been melted, and—”

Mrs. Willard might have proceeded to repeat by rote the whole of Miss Leslie's “Housekeeper's Ma-

nual," or Miss Beecher's "Domestic Economy," if Evelyn had not exclaimed—"Stop, mother! stop!" and playfully covered her mother's mouth with her hand.—
 "How *am* I to remember one half you have been telling me? I have forgotten it already. Oxalic acid and alcohol for the table, and British lustre for the walls,—and—"

"No, no," said Mrs. Willard laughing, "pretty walls you would make with British lustre; the lustre is black and must be used for the hearth-pan, and soda for—"

"The ablet of my memory is too contracted for such extensive and important directions, mother; you had better give the orders to the servants yourself."

"But you must superintend the servants, child."

"But if I told them wrong—and I know I should—I never saw British lustre in my life, and as for soda, I know what *soda-water* is, but I suppose that is not what you use for the walls?"

Mrs. Willard laughed outright, and I could not help joining in her merriment; even Mr. Merritt smiled an unwilling smile. Mr. Willard alone looked serious, and fidgeted nervously on his chair, stretching out his legs and suddenly drawing them in again.

"You do not deserve to have a house, Evelyn," began Mrs. Willard with lecturing gravity, "you are totally unfit to take care of one. Remember, my child, that if you desire to make your husband's home comfortable, you will manage to have everything around him in the most perfect order, everything neat and tasteful. You will attend to your domestic affairs, visit your kitchen, direct your servants, give your attention to——"

"To a hundred things which I don't understand, and which will only weary me, and make me melancholy," said Evelyn, with her eyes bent on the ground and her cheeks glowing with shame.

"The child is quite unfit for what she has undertaken!" exclaimed Mrs. Willard pityingly, but without addressing her remark to any one in particular, although she glanced at her son-in-law.

"So she is!" replied Mr. Merritt, rising from his

chair, and fixing his eyes on the offending mantel-piece ;
 “ and I—I have a proposition to make——”

He stopped and remained lost in thought. Mrs. Willard advanced towards him with a winning look, and said in a soft tone, “ What were you about to propose, my *dear* Walter ?”

Mr. Merritt looked up, as though half uncertain whether or not he should continue, but his doubt vanished as he observed Mrs. Willard’s charming expression of countenance, and saw that Evelyn’s eyes were glistening with half-formed tears.

“ I was going to propose that you and Mr. Willard and Ellen should make my house your home, and that you should relieve Evelyn of these cares.”

Mr. Willard leaped from his seat, rubbed his hands furiously together, and then, as though feeling that he evinced too much emotion, caught hold of the buttons of his coat and twisted them between his fingers with unwonted energy.

Evelyn threw herself into her husband’s arms, but springing away from him before he could embrace her, danced about the room for very joy.

Mr. Merritt’s face beamed with delight as he gazed upon the graceful creature. Mrs. Willard alone was perfectly unmoved.

After a moment’s pause, she replied with great calmness, “ You are very kind, Walter, but I cannot accept your offer. I never could consent to be a burden upon the husband of my child.”

Evelyn paused in the middle of her pirouette, and Mr. Willard sank back in his chair.

“ But you will be no burden ; it would give me pleasure to have you here,” said Mr. Merritt.

“ It would give *me* pleasure also, but I *cannot* make up my mind that it is exactly *right* ; therefore you must excuse me, although I thank you for your generosity.”

“ But the generosity is on *your* side, my dear madam ; I shall esteem it as a great *favor* if you make my house your home ;” returned Mr. Merritt with increasing warmth.

Evelyn now joined her persuasions to those of her husband, and Mrs. Willard, after resisting them both for some time—which resistance only rendered them more determined to carry their point,—answered, “I am ready to yield to your wishes, I may say your entreaties, my children, but I am afraid that your father—”

“I,” shouted Mr. Willard, extending his arms as though he was addressing an audience at Tammany Hall, whom he determined to impress, “I am ready to come here to-morrow! to-day! to-ni——” At a glance from his wife, his arms were suddenly jerked back toward his sides, his animated look was changed to one of deep reflection, and he answered with the slowness of doubt, “I don’t—*know*—how it—*will*—do—though; perhaps it won’t.”

Mrs. Willard with wifely tenderness now persuaded him not to decide hastily; and after some remonstrance he answered, “It *shall be* just as you choose, my dear: you know that I *always* yield to your wishes.”

You may suppose that I, who saw behind the scenes, laughed in my heart while this little farce was enacting; though at the same time I admired the skill with which the plot was designed and the grace with which it was executed.

That same week, Mr. and Mrs. Willard and Ellen left Fleecer’s and took up their abode with Mr. and Mrs. Merritt.

The change that took place in Mr. Merritt’s household through the instrumentality of its new presiding genius was truly electrifying. Perfect order reigned throughout the establishment; the servants were in submission, and performed their duties with alacrity and cheerfulness; the family expenses were all carefully noted down in an account-book kept by Mrs. Willard; she daily attended the market herself, and the table was supplied with all the choice dishes of the season, arranged and cooked in epicurean style; the whole house assumed an air of comfort; cobwebs and dust disappeared; the furniture was covered with handsome chintz; the plate, silver, door-knobs, the mantels, hearths,

tables, were all like mirrors, and brightly reflected brighter faces. In short, the house became like a great clock, whose movements went on with admirable and unvarying regularity, the wheels of which were all out of sight, although the hand that guided them was ever visible.

There is one little word in our language which I never thoroughly comprehended, until I became acquainted with Mrs. Willard—that word is *tact*. I knew that *tact* might be defined as the faculty of rendering oneself agreeable to everybody; but the manner in which a high degree of tact enabled one person to seize upon the weak points of another, and to assail his heart through these unguarded avenues—to divine his thoughts and instinctively become aware of what acts, or topics of conversation would please him—this I never before understood. Mrs. Willard's tact seems to be a natural gift, cultivated to the highest possible degree; and it certainly renders her a most delightful companion. If she only possessed more truthfulness, it would make her a loveable one.

It is through her *tact* that she has made herself indispensable to Mr. Merritt. I have mentioned to you how desirous he is of obtaining the good opinion of "the world"—how fearful he is of its censure—how observant of all *les petites convenances*, and how heartily he detests everything *sans façon*. The most trivial disregard of ceremonious etiquette makes him miserable. Mrs. Willard discovered all this at a glance, and appears by some subtle and mysterious process to have moulded her nature to suit his. She pays the most scrupulous attention to all the little arbitrary laws which govern society, and she has an indescribable mode of delicately forcing others to do the same.

She has quickly taught herself to consider it a heinous offence to ring a bell, open a door, pick up her own handkerchief, throw up the sash, or poke the fire, while there is a gentleman in the room, or a servant in the house, to perform these offices for her. When she ascends the stairs, attended by a gentleman, she is care-

A ful to make him precede her, when she descends he is to follow her—his arm must always be at her command, his hands ready to be of service—his ears all attention. The most trivial indecorum in his mode of standing or sitting, the slightest abstraction, the most uncertain *souçon* of a fawn, she will instantly and pointedly resent, by her looks and demeanor.

The servants have been instructed in all the necessary punctilios of their station, and she has spared no pains to render her husband and daughters as decorous as herself. Evelyn is the only one who ever disregards the established rules, but then her transgressions are so graceful that the rebuke dies away even upon her formal and exacting husband's lips.

Mrs. Willard has a wonderful memory and a more wonderful faculty of invention, or rather of hearing more than is said, seeing more than takes place, and giving a meaning to very casual remarks which the speaker never intended. Of this faculty, as of all others, she makes an agreeable use. Mr. Merritt is daily entertained with anecdotes which conclusively prove to him in what high estimation he is held by "*the world*," how much his wife is admired—how select and agreeable, people think his parties—how genteel his house, how excellent his servants—in short, he is daily convinced that he and his establishment are the envy and admiration of this great city of Gotham.

Then Mrs. Willard unites to her other accomplishments that of being an excellent *cuisinière*; and though her son-in-law is not naturally an epicure, she has succeeded in making him one.

I not unfrequently dine with Evelyn, and I have never, I think, risen from table without having heard Mrs. Willard address her son-in-law in an affectionate tone with: "My dear Walter, try a slice of this ham, it has been cooked in Champagne,—you will find it delicious;" or, "let me help you to a little of this fricassee, I invented the receipt myself;" or, "now Walter, this *omelette soufflée* was made on purpose for you and I know of nothing more difficult to make in perfection,

you must taste it before I confess by whom it was prepared."

But I must pause, although this is but a small item of what I might bring forward in evidence of Mrs. Willard's *tact*. The sketch, though incomplete, will at least give you some idea of the mental features of my friend.

I know not why, but Evelyn has entwined herself about my heart in a manner which is not only inexplicable but indescribable. I do not love her exactly for her virtues, for they are allied to qualities which might ripen into positive vices. Her beauty could charm my eyes but not my heart — her restless animation and tireless brilliancy might entertain me but not win my affection. What sentiment she inspires I cannot define, but there is a nameless fascination about her, the potency of which I acknowledge but may not analyze. This fascination I feel most intensely when I listen to her

"Deep but tender melody of tone:"

for her voice is round and rich rather than sweet and clear, and when she becomes energetic its sound is sometimes strangely thrilling.

And yet, what wonder that I should love her! I who have seen the nearest and dearest, one by one, summoned away—who have stood beside the death-couch of father, mother, sisters, friends—outliving all that I loved, and feeling that my heart was a sanctuary peopled with the spirits of the departed, but where few of this world find place? I have long passed the happy though dangerous period when we give our affections by impulse, and yield ourselves up to new friendships without a fear or a reflection; yet Evelyn has linked herself to me, insensibly beguiled me of my love, and made me forget my own desolateness. She fills my heart and beside her I cease to remember what I have lost—the faithless and the dead, and that I must finish life's journey alone, rejoicing that its end approaches.

I have told you that I trembled and that my heart was filled with dark forebodings, when I saw Evelyn place her hand in Mr. Merritt's and promise to be his

wife. I trembled because I felt that she was capable of entertaining the most ardent, the most reckless passion. And she did not love Mr. Merritt with that self-sacrificing, self-forgetting love which should inspire a woman before she consents to become a wife. But now, my fears have vanished; Evelyn certainly *does* love her husband, for she loves everybody, almost without discrimination; she does not love him *better* perhaps than many others, nor with a *different* love, yet she loves him, and is not herself conscious that she could love more deeply.

As for Mr. Merritt, precise and formal, and worldly as many might deem him, he is none of these to her — his only pleasurable existence is by her side; and he seems almost to have lost his own identity in her's. His affection never slumbers, as too often slumber the affections of men who have gained all they desired, and consequently sink into a state of mental lethargy. Evelyn is so vivacious, so variable, so *piquante*, that her very presence forbids the repose of indifference; her very frivolities and faults make her remembered.

She is a tyrant in her own playful way, and brooks no opposition. But her wit and grace make even her tyranny charming, as it were, gilding her errors. The other day I overheard an animated conversation between her and her husband concerning the arrangement of a large mirror which they had just purchased.

"We must have it placed over the mantel-piece," said Mr. Merritt; "I bought it exactly to fit there."

"No, no," returned Evelyn; "I do not like glasses over mantel-pieces; it must be placed between the windows."

"But why, my sweet Evelyn," replied Mr. Merritt; "*why* do you not like it there?"

"Oh! because—because—because our mantel-pieces are built so low that the mirror would reflect my own face whenever I sat by the fire."

"What then?"

"Why then — then, I would rather have it reflected in the more partial mirror of your eyes," was her lively reply.

Mr. Merritt looked half-conquered, half-inclined to yield; but the mirror was so obviously intended for the mantel, that he still persisted it should be placed there. Evelyn warmly opposed him, and casually made use of the expression that it was not his province to decide on such matters.

“Am I not the head of the house?” he answered, rather seriously, and with more dignity than was precisely necessary.

“To be sure you are—but I am *next* to the *head*, am I not?” said Evelyn, archly.

“Certainly, my love.”

“Then I must be the *neck*—you will admit that I am the *neck*—am I not?”

Mr. Merritt smiled at the strange conceit, and answered, “Yes, you shall be the *neck* if you so please.”

“And I shall have all the *privileges* of the *neck*?”

“Yes, yes; all, if you will only remember that I am the *head*.”

“Oh, I have not forgotten that—you are the *head*, and I am the *neck*; and you know that it is the *neck that turns and guides the head*; so I, the *neck*, decide that the mirror be placed between the windows, and turn you, the *head*, as I will!”

Mr. Merritt laughed, kissed her glowing cheek, and acknowledged himself conquered. Evelyn, as usual, had found the *way* to have her *will*.

I need hardly tell you that Evelyn, since her marriage, has created quite a sensation in the *fashionable world*. By the *fashionable world* in New York, you must not understand a circle of well-bred, refined, and highly-educated persons—these belong to another class, and seldom wander out of their sphere. The *fashionable circle* here, is composed of the dashing and wealthy, especially those who have risen to sudden wealth, and those who are nominally rich; that is, of persons who, from the display they make, are supposed to be worth much money. And this is principally the class with which Evelyn mingles.

If you know anything of the *beau monde*, you will

easily conceive that the instant Evelyn became mistress of a handsome house, all her husband's and mother's friends, and even bowing acquaintances, thronged around her. Invitations poured in, and acceptances poured out.

Evelyn entered the gay world attended by her husband, and was courted, admired, and surrounded by flatterers. Mr. Merritt is strongly inclined to jealousy; but he had too much fear of being ridiculed, too much respect for the proprieties of life, to remain continually by her side. His wife being *himself*, he had no right, { according to etiquette, to distinguish her by his notice. } Yet his eyes followed her wherever she moved; and even when engaged in conversation, his ears were too often closed to every sound but her voice.

Her manners are peculiarly frank, child-like, and engaging; she is courteous to all, gay with all; and if she feel any preference, shows none.

"Bright as the sun her eyes the gazer strike,
But like the sun they shine on all alike."

While I have been descanting about the happy Evelyn, I have quite lost sight of her less-favoured sister. Poor Ellen! the web of her life appears to be woven of dark threads, and I have looked in vain to discover some hidden bright one. I am convinced that however great our sorrows or trials may be, we can never be truly miserable while a ray of *hope* illumines the far-distant future. But Ellen is a being without hope. She has nothing to look forward to in this life; and of another, she either knows nothing, or thinks not at all. She is silent, uncomplaining, dejected, and suffering; but her silence is that of despair, not of patience. She never murmurs, because she seeks no sympathy; her dejection is never dispelled, because her own misfortunes so entirely fill her thoughts, that the joy of others can never be communicated; and her sufferings are unmitigated, because she can never forget them. She seeks no employment, but wanders about lonely and depressed, or sits with hands folded and downcast eyes, from which I have often watched the tears quietly stealing. Evelyn's

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
 SUBJECT: [Illegible]

[Illegible text]

1. [Illegible]

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2. [Illegible]

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tenderness and caresses can only transiently arouse her, and she shrinks back within herself as though unfit or unworthy to return her lovely sister's affection. And yet does not the rich earth yield balm even for such a spirit? But she who will not stoop to gather, passes onward and discovers not the treasure upon which her careless feet are treading.

Mr. Willard has grown quite jocose since he has been convinced of the success of his wife's plans. He ponders as deeply as ever, and sometimes breaks out into a coarse hollow laugh, and rubs his hands from some unapparent cause of glee; then checking himself, silently paces the room and brushes one sleeve with the cuff of the other; and soon, with his chin seeking the shelter of his knees, sinks into a reverie very much resembling sleep. Of this strange mirth, he is never prepared to give any intelligible explanation, but answers with his usual dry and solemn precision when questioned.

As for Richard he has been safely disposed of; a repetition of his visit convinced Mr. Merritt of the necessity of action. He very kindly proposed to his brother-in-law that he should seek his fortune in Texas, offering to procure him letters of introduction, and to pay his expenses. Richard, who declared he had a taste for travelling, because it was "so independent," was easily prevailed upon to accept Mr. Merritt's offer, and two days after he set sail. The family have heard of his safe arrival, but nothing further. His sojourn amongst the fiery-blooded Texians can hardly be too prolonged to gratify his loving relatives.

CHAPTER IV.

“The sunshine round seems dim and cold,
The flowers are pale, and life is old,
And words fall soulless on my ear!”

MRS. HEMANS.

From the Same to the Same.

How strangely do we err in trusting implicitly to first impressions! Few exist in that pure, exalted, and sensitive state of being which enables them to judge, as it were by instinct, or from an inner consciousness of the qualities of a stranger! The angels, through their celestial purity and wisdom, must possess this Ithuriel-like perception, but until mortals resemble the angels in the holiness of their lives, such an attribute can never be theirs.

So thought I this morning, as I sat pondering upon the character of Amy Ellwell. On my first acquaintance with Amy, she appeared to be cold, reserved, and inanimate, a being whose unruffled features were a correct index of the immobility of her spirit. But day by day I discover how strangely my hasty judgment has wronged her. She wins without dazzling, and subdues your heart almost before you are aware that it is impressed. She is a profound thinker, yet remarkable for her simplicity; well read, yet too gentle to be ambitious of displaying her extensive knowledge. Her temper is placid, and, without wanting strength of character, she is more exquisitely feminine in her manners and disposition than any woman I ever knew. Her unvarying sincerity is one of her highest charms, though it at times causes her to seem cold and reserved.

When I described her formerly, I told you that she was not decidedly *pretty* though *picturesque-looking*. This word *picturesque* was suggested by the classical

arrangement of her bright-coloured hair, and the peculiarly graceful, I might almost say poetical style of her dress; yet I beg to take back my words when I declared that she was not pretty. Her features are not regularly handsome, and her countenance is too serene to strike, but when she is roused, when her heart is touched, or her interest awakened, a warm glow overspreads her usually colourless cheek, and lights her clear blue eyes—her somewhat full lip curves itself into an arch, and seems to speak before her words—her entire appearance and expression are altered—for *soul* that seemed wanting, changes the whole by its beautifying presence. I can now comprehend why Evelyn loves her, for Evelyn—

I had just written the last word when a gentle tap sounded on my door, and as it opened I could not but murmur to myself, "*parlez du soleil on voit ses rayons,*" for Evelyn herself entered; and to what could I compare her so appropriately as to a sunbeam? She was followed by Ellen, who begged that I would permit her to remain in my chamber while Evelyn paid a visit to Miss Hilson. I gladly consented, and hastily closing my secretary wiped my pen.

Evelyn disappeared, and I made Ellen sit down in the most comfortable corner of my little blue couch-sofa, placing a pillow behind her for support. She silently looked her thanks—I can scarcely say *smiled* them, for the smile was too sad and transient to merit the name. I knew that it was difficult to engage her in conversation, but kindness, or perhaps compassion, prompted me to make the attempt.

Frederika Bremer's delightful tale of "The Neighbours" was lying open on the sofa beside her. I took it up (as the nearest subject *at hand* upon which I could seize), and said:

"This is a most charming book, this 'Neighbours': have you read it, Ellen?"

"No," was the discouraging answer.

"I believe you seldom read works of fiction?"

The same monosyllabic reply.

Still I continued. "There are persons who object to all works of the imagination, but I cannot view every tale of fiction in an unfavourable light. I look upon the works of Frederika Bremer as a real blessing to mankind. To the weary and sad at heart, to those who drag through the toilsome day harassed by care, or oppressed by sorrow, her productions are an inestimable blessing—refreshment, forgetfulness, and even fortitude to encounter the trials of life may be found in their pages. When I rise from the perusal of one of these tales, I feel myself interiorly strengthened, all that is good within me is summoned forth into active life, and all that is evil lies dormant!"

I paused a moment in my energetic discourse, but Ellen, although she had listened with attention, made no reply.

"Pray tell me," I added, "why you never read works of fiction—I mean such works as these, which should rather be called works of *fictitious realities*?"

Ellen looked at me, her lips moved tremulously as though she was trying to speak, and she burst into tears.

In an instant I was at her side, consoling her, embracing her, and entreating her to pardon me, although I knew not for what offence.

She wept some time, almost without noticing my distress—but at last sobbed out, "I do not read them—because—because they picture emotions which I must never feel, and describe happiness which I can never know—because I *dare* not!"

I was shocked and hardly knew what to answer. Before I could make up my mind what course to pursue, Ellen dried her tears, and said, in a voice which showed that her burdened heart was for the first time finding vent. "Oh! Miss Bolton, you do not know how dreadful it is to live, taking up a place in the world of which you form no part; your very life a misery to yourself and a burden to others! With nothing to look forward to, nothing to hope for, nothing to desire but—death!"

I was moved, and determined to speak boldly, and if

possible, to show this unfortunate girl her error. "Ellen," I replied, with forced calmness, "can you think that it is the design of Him who created all things for a wise end, that any human being should merely *fill a place in this world* without being of service to his fellow-creatures and to himself? God in giving us the various and wonderful faculties, with which all are to a greater or lesser degree endowed, has evidently designed us to become 'forms of use;' for to bestow a useless gift would be inconsistent with his wisdom. To some he has given the ten talents, to some five, and to some but one; but to all he has given at least that one. And have you a right to go and bury your one talent in the earth instead of using and increasing it to five? When you see that the reward of use is happiness, even in this world—that occupation brings enjoyment—that the *only* permanent happiness is found in active life, can you help being convinced that to be useful to others and to ourselves is our destined end? We learn this lesson from every tree, every herb, every flower that grows, even from the meanest weed that we trample beneath our feet. Are they not all images of use, springing up to some useful end? Does not every one possess some property serviceable to mankind, and does not every one perform an appointed office? There is virtue in the leaves even of the despised weed; and look, how it unfolds those leaves, shoots forth blossoms, and forms seed which serves to propagate its species?"

"But of what use could *I* ever be in the world?" questioned Ellen mournfully. "A wife I can never become; I can never know the joy of being a mother; I can never brighten the home of one whom I may love; I must not even follow the impulses of my nature, and dare to love—look at me—I am too like the weed in appearance, but have not its offices to perform."

"What you are God has made you, and for a wise purpose, although it may be for one which you cannot fathom. By repining you upbraid him, who will give you cause to rejoice, even in your affliction, if you will but seek for that cause. Because you can never fill the

tender offices of wife and mother, must you neglect the thousand others which you *can* fill? And how do you know that you are not blessed in your very privations? It is not every wife that wears thornless roses on her brow, nor every mother's heart that throbs with a joyful pulse."

"Their very cares and sorrows were preferable to an existence which resembles a sky without either cloud or sun."

"The instant that you serve others with a view to their happiness, that is from a principle of affection without any regard to selfish ends, you will behold a sun of love brightening that unillumined sky."

"But whom can I serve? My father, mother, sister—there are few kind offices which circumstances will permit me to perform for them; to whom can I be useful?"

"Ah! Ellen," I replied, "can you ask that question while this great city teems with the indigent and the suffering, whose wretched existence might be rendered more tolerable through the exertions of a humane heart?"

"But what have I to give? you know that 'charity must begin at home.'"

"But should sometimes travel abroad. Pardon me, Ellen, if I say that you do not understand the true meaning of the old adage. I agree with you that charity should begin at home, but what is the nature of this charity? A man is bound to provide food and raiment for his body, and to guard its health, with a view that he may make that body a fit instrument for the operations of his soul. He is also bound to provide necessaries for his soul, to develop all its faculties, to seek the culture which will advance it in understanding and wisdom, and all this with a view that his soul may have the capacity to serve his friends, his citizens, his country, and his God. This is the charity which begins at home. If you are thus charitable, you are charitable to yourself, which is the commencement of all charity."

"I acknowledge the truth of your reasoning," said

Ellen, much softened, "and I would willingly be charitable, not only to myself, but to others in the common acceptation of the term; but, dependent as I am, what have I to bestow upon the destitute?"

"Much; it is not alms of which the poor are most in need. The mere alleviation of their physical wretchedness is not all that they require. They need sympathy and counsel—to be taught economy (for the poor are generally the improvident), to be inspired with hope—they need moral influence—not bread alone, but the spiritual food which will exalt their minds and thus elevate their condition. All this you can bestow. You can become an instrument of good, dispensing blessings as you pass along, and breathing in the ear of misery those words of consolation and peace, which

"—Sink into the sullen soul of vice,
And win him o'er to virtue."

If I judge your heart aright you would, in performing these duties, receive inexpressible gratification. And amongst the brambles and weeds which you must necessarily encounter, you will sometimes find a neglected flower whose wild beauty deserves a richer soil."

"Why have I never thought of all this before! What a different life I might have led!" exclaimed Ellen. "You have been a friend to me," continued she with emotion, "and Heaven only knows how much I needed one! I will try to profit by your counsel, but I hardly know how to begin."

At this moment our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Evelyn and Laura. Evelyn's quick eyes instantly remarked the unusual animation apparent upon Ellen's countenance, from which the trace of tears had not yet vanished. She turned to me and said,

"Why, Miss Bolton, what have you been doing? What a shower of dewdrops you have been flinging over our Mimosetta!"

This is a playful name which she has given to Ellen on account of her resemblance to the Mimosa or sensitive plant.

Before I could reply, Laura Hilson made some not very courteous observation upon the closeness of the room, and followed it by a less courteous denunciation of all small rooms, and small rooms on fourth floors in particular. To tell the truth, I was not sorry that she found my chamber, in vulgar parlance, "too hot to hold her."

It is wise to look for good in everything and everybody, but I never could have the wisdom to find, or rather was never encouraged to look for anything good in Miss Hilson. Her manners repel me, and I cannot like her. I am sorry that she is so intimate with Evelyn, for her friendship cannot be productive of good.

Evelyn was in haste, and the party soon took their leave. When Ellen bade me adieu, I felt her hand tremble as it pressed mine, and the grateful and affectionate expression of her still humid eyes made my heart beat tumultuously. Ah! if I could but lend sunshine to her life, what reflected brightness would irradiate mine own!

CHAPTER V.

"The face recalls some face, as 'twere with pain."

BYRON.

"When last we parted thou wert young and fair,
How beautiful let fond remembrance say!"

BOWLES.

From the Same to the Same.

November 28th.

AN old familiar face! A face that we have known in earlier and perhaps brighter years; that is linked with all that we have loved of the past—every lineament of which we have scanned when the ambient mist of trusting, hopeful youth yet floated before our enchanted eyes—Ah! Necromancer Memory, what visions come rushing back upon Sorrow's sobered sight, when such a face rouses thee from thy slumbers!

Yesterday afternoon I was hurrying through Broadway, and, in spite of haste, glancing from side to side, as is my wont, and speculating upon the probable histories of those I encountered—upon the griefs which had furrowed the care-worn faces—the joys that illumined the radiant countenances flitting by me, when my eyes rested upon one face that riveted them in spite of myself. Involuntarily I stopped, every pulse quickened, my breath came gaspingly forth, and for a moment my brain reeled. When I looked again, the person had passed on; but I could not be mistaken—it *was* Ernest Elton.

Fifteen years had borne away, in their flight, much of the manly beauty for which he was once renowned. But his forehead, always fine, looked broader and higher than formerly; for the dark and luxuriant locks that clustered about it in youth were thinned away, and besprinkled with Time's snow-flakes. His eyes, though

sunken, were still bright and piercing; but a deepening hollow was apparent in either cheek, from which the brilliant flush of health and happiness had wholly vanished. His once transparent skin was strangely sallow-ed. The whole expression of his face had changed, and spoke of passions which have rather wearied themselves to rest than been subdued by reason.

“I too must be changed!” I reflected—“so changed that he did not know me.” And the same chilling sensation shot through me which filled my breast when, some years since, I stood before my mirror with the first detected grey hair in my hand; when I sought for, and found, the first incipient wrinkles that were planting their crow-feet about my eyes. In a moment the feeling vanished, I forgot the grey hair and the coming wrinkles, and thought only of Springfield—the pleasant home of my life’s spring—I thought of my sunny, flower-decked chamber—the summer-house and the woodbine that stole in at its windows; of the hopes that sprang to life as I breathed the incense of those variegated flowers, and that perished before they had withered. Then I beheld with dream-like distinctness, my father, in his favorite arm-chair, drawn out upon the trellised porch, with spectacles on his nose and newspaper in his hand. My mother’s pale but ever serene countenance rose before me—and the face of another—that of a young and handsome man, a visage full of freshness, and hope, and enthusiasm, and apparent truth—the face was the same that I encountered but yesterday afternoon—the same, yet how different!

I wish that I could have spoken to Mr. Elton once again, for I can now look with quiet resignation upon the past, and why should we not be friends? I would have spoken to him of his wife—of his children, if he has any, and perhaps made him doubt that what *has been ever was*.

These thoughts engrossed my mind until I reached Mr. Merritt’s, but were then quickly dispelled. When I entered the parlour I found Evelyn bounding about the room with a battledore in her hand, following a shuttle-

cock through the air; playing by herself for lack of a companion. Her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks glowed from the graceful exercise; she was too much absorbed to observe me. Mrs. Willard sat on one side of the blazing fire, knitting lace, which, by the by, is a very fashionable employment of the ladies here. Ellen was seated on the other side of the fire, with an unusual companion—a book in her hand! I might have remained some minutes unnoticed had not Evelyn's shuttlecock lit upon my hat, barely escaping the tip of my nose.

"Carissima," explained Evelyn, with her arms about my neck, "I am so glad you have come; I want somebody to play battledore with me!" Her fingers were quickly at work in my hat-strings, I was disencumbered of cloak and shawl, and before I could salute either Mrs. Willard or Ellen, the battledore was playfully thrust in my hand, Evelyn had taken her place, lightly tossed the shuttlecock in the air, as lightly struck it, and it was glancing through the room to be received by me!

I could not hope to escape from engaging in the game, and played per force until Evelyn remarked that I looked wearied and in worse spirits than usual.

"What is the matter, Carissima? Are you ill?" said she, throwing down the battledore and tossing her shuttlecock upon the piano.

Let me explain to you that Evelyn's warmth of heart renders it impossible for her to call those whom she loves by their formal titles, and she generally bestows upon her especial friends some appellation more congenial to her feelings. "Carissima" is the name she has given me, either from its resemblance to Katerine, or because the term is expressive of her affection.

I assured her that I was well, but fatigued and needed rest, at the same time taking a seat beside Ellen.

Ellen smilingly pointed to her book as she marked the page, and said: "Is it not beautiful?"

I read the title, (it was "The President's Daughter," by Frederika Bremer,) and replied, "Yes, are you not deeply interested in that sweet Adelaide?"

“Oh! it is Edla who interests me most,” was her feeling answer; “she was so homely, so unhappy, so unfortunate—she was so like—that is something, *something like*——”

I divined the conclusion of her sentence, for she left it unfinished, but Mrs. Willard prevented my replying by calling upon me to admire her lace.

At that instant a violent ringing of the street-door bell attracted our attention. It was succeeded by a bustle in the entry. We could easily distinguish the words pronounced by Mr. Merritt’s punctilious waiter, “I will see if the ladies are at home, sir; may I trouble you for your card?”

“Card! I have no card? How dare you ask for *my* card in this house?” was the angry reply of a very hoarse voice. “Get out of the way, will you, or I’ll knock you into the middle of next week! Who do you suppose I am? I’m the brother of your mistress, you silly coon, and I shall report your conduct. Well, what are you staring at now? Will you show me to Mrs. Merritt, to Evelyn, to my *sister*, or not?”

Mrs. Willard clasped her hands in alarm as these words reached her ear, but Evelyn followed the impulse of her heart, and springing to the door threw it open.

“Richard! Is it possible!” and in spite of the gaping waiter who was looking on in silent wonder, Evelyn burst into a fit of merry laughter. I could hardly help participating at once in her merriment, and in her mother’s consternation, as I surveyed the grotesque individual who stood with the door-knob clasped in one hand, and the other stretched out towards Evelyn.

It is one of Mr. Richard Willard’s peculiarities that his garments always appear to be worn in evidence of the friendly terms on which he lives with mankind. They are always either too small or *too large* for him, although they might have been an excellent fit for a friend. In this instance his limbs appeared to have elongated after they were inserted in his clothes. As he thrust out his browned and sun-baked hand, to greet Evelyn, the coat-sleeve into which his arm had been

dexterously forced, made a desperate effort to retreat towards his elbow, leaving bare his long wrist and displaying an undergarment of doubtful whiteness. His strapless nether accoutrements evinced the same obvious desire to mount upwards and eschew all contact with the dusty "Wellington's," that painfully encased his feet.

There is always that mingling of opposites — of the jockey and sloven, in his costume, which perfectly accords with the strange blending of *mauvaise honte* and impudence apparent in his character. His grass-green coat had lost its first verdant freshness, but it had been brushed with scrupulous care and was worn with an air of burlesque foppishness quite indescribable. His coffee-colored shirt-collar was folded with a Byronian turn over a dingy scarf cravat, upon the artistical tie of which great labour and thought had been expended. And faintly from amidst the cravat's dusty folds shone a jewelled brooch of doubtful genuineness. His long lightish hair was carefully parted with girlish grace upon his forehead, and smoothed on either temple, while its split and shaggy ends luxuriated in melo-dramatic disorder about his sunburnt and weather-beaten countenance. His face, too, was adorned with whiskers, cultivated with scientific skill but obstinately growing in scraggy patches about his yellowish 'cheeks, like fruitful spots on a sandy desert.

After Evelyn's first exclamation, everyone of us stood, or sat, for a moment as though transfixed: and wonderingly gazing at the unexpected intruder; Mrs. Willard broke the silence by half screaming out, "Richard! what on earth brought you back?"

Richard replied by warmly saluting the whole company in turn; and then planting himself with widely parted feet before his mother, answered: "What brought me back? Why *nature* to be sure! Nature! I wanted to see you all again—I don't admire living at a distance from one's family. Dick's not the boy for that!" Here he assumed a Hamlet tone and air:

“There’s too much of the brother and the son in me, *good mother*, for that!”

“But did you not like Texas?” questioned Mrs. Willard.

“Like it! to be sure I did. Capital place! Hard to beat! Some independent fellows there, I can tell you—splendid fellows—gentlemen *inside, good mother*, and that’s better than gentlemen that are only gentlemen out—but New York’s the place for me. Not a state in the Union can hold a candle to it. I’m tired of travelling, I’ve seen enough of the world, and have come at last to rest in the bosom of my family!”

Mrs. Willard’s bosom heaved at the thought.—Richard now sank into a luxurious arm-chair that stood invitingly behind him, with a ludicrous expression of affection, (which was too sincere to excite my risibility,) distorting rather than illumining his visage.

“Well, Richard, I do believe——” commenced Evelyn, placing her hand affectionately on his shoulder.

“Don’t call me *Richard!*” shouted he, interrupting her. “Haven’t I told you a thousand times that I *will* be called *Dick*—Dick’s more independent—it’s just the name for an American. Do you suppose travelling has made a fool of me? No! my outward man it may have polished, but it has left my heart—my *heart*, Evy, the same!”

An answer was upon Evelyn’s lips, and from the unusually mild expression of her eyes I knew that it was a kind one, but Richard rattled on before she could speak.

“How’s Walter, Evy? Treats you well, don’t he? Remember, you must come to me for advice—shan’t charge you heavy counsel fees. How am I looking, Evy? Well; am I not? Travelling hasn’t harmed me, though I’ve seen something of the world. By the by, talking of looks, I’ve got a handsome fellow to introduce to you, Evy—Colonel Damoreau of the regular army. A splendid, independent fellow! Met him by accident in New Orleans—both of us travelling for pleasure—he took a fancy to me and I of course returned the compliment, as every real gentleman was

bound to do. In pretty low water I was just then, had to travel on foot from Nachitoches to New Orleans, and——”

“How did you carry your wardrobe?” enquired Mrs. Willard.

“Carry it? Why as I do now, and always did before, on my back! There’s no use of a man’s keeping more clothes than he can wear at one time, it only breeds trouble and makes washing and mending. When those I have on wear out I throw them away, and manage to get another suit—plaguy hard work sometimes, but I console myself by remembering that sparrows are clothed, and so shall I be—that’s philosophy for you—true philosophy!”

“What about Colonel Damoreau?” asked Evelyn.

“Why he fell in with me, and I fell in with him. He’s a splendid fellow—rich as a nabob, and generous as a woman. He’s travelling for amusement, and as I amused him, and he amused me, and we were going the same way, we went together. He paid the shot, of course. I told him who you all were, and where you lived, and all about you. He’s dying to see you, Evy, I gave him such a description—I must introduce him and no mistake—take care of your heart—he beats Walter all hollow, he does!”

Just at that moment, the parlour-door opened, and Laura Hilson entered, followed by—Mr. Merritt himself.

I caught the expression of Laura’s eyes as they rested upon Richard, and then were turned cautiously to Mr. Merritt. The first look was one of irrepressible triumph; the second seemed to say, “Look there! there is your *brother!*”

Mr. Merritt grew ashy pale; Evelyn, perfectly unembarrassed, saluted Laura, and was advancing towards her husband, when Richard courageously started up. Blue, and purple, and red, and scarlet spots, were forming a rainbow on his face, as he thrust himself before his sister, and blustered out:

“Hey! Walter, how d’ye do? Here I am, you see!”

"I observe you are here, sir," replied Mr. Merritt, with appalling gravity, and accompanying his words with a formal bow.

"Richard did not find Texas a very agreeable place of sojourn," interposed Mrs. Willard, in a conciliatory voice; "I am in hopes that we shall discover——"

"Beg your pardon, good mother," exclaimed Richard — "found it an exceedingly agreeable place — couldn't like any place better, only the ties of nature drew me back to my family. I'm a brother and a son, sir," continued he, enthusiastically; and, turning to Mr. Merritt, "and those ties link me to New York!"

Laura Hilson again glanced at Mr. Merritt, who colored as he met her eye. Mrs. Willard commenced some further explanation or palliation of her son's conduct; but Richard would not permit her to speak without interruption. She could hardly conceal her vexation, Ellen looked distressed, and Evelyn at once amused and annoyed. Laura, after bowing to Richard, whom she purposely passed, walked towards the window. Richard returned the bow in the most grotesquely reverential manner, and expressed himself grateful for her complimentary treatment.

Mr. Merritt, without taking further notice of any of us, even of his wife, joined Laura at the window, and she conversed with him for some time in an under-tone.

Richard, who was just sufficiently abashed to assume more boldness than ever, soon bustled up to Mr. Merritt, and said: "Well, Walter, I see you take care of Evy; she looks well; never saw her look better — handsome house you've got — good location — fine furniture — everything as it should be!"

Mr. Merritt did not reply to Mr. Richard Willard's approbatory remarks. I do not know how this unpleasant scene would have ended had it not been for an accident, which increased our annoyance at the time; yet, like most accidents, turned out fortunately in the end.

Richard, upon whose brow the moisture of excitement was rapidly gathering, drew out his flaming red handkerchief to wipe away the drops as they rolled

down his face. This same handkerchief had fallen a few moments previous near a coal-skuttle, which the officious waiter, solely for the purpose of seeing what was taking place, had brought into the room. It seemed a relief to our unfortunate friend to conceal his glowing cheeks, and I was not surprised to see him diligently rubbing forehead, cheek, and chin—but lo! wherever the fatal handkerchief passed, a long, black streak spread itself around at each renewed friction! I was the first one to observe this mishap, and my involuntary ejaculation attracted the attention of the others. Everybody looked at Richard, whose begrimed face grew scarlet at our inspection.

“What are you all staring and laughing at?” demanded he, in real confusion and pretended anger.

Mrs. Willard hastily rose, and took his arm to lead him out of the room. It was with difficulty that she could give utterance to the words, “Richard—your face—your handkerchief—the coal-skuttle—come with me!”

Richard showed no inclination to obey; but she determinately forced him to retire, much to the relief of all present.

When they were gone, Mr. Merritt rang the bell and ordered tea, but made no remark on what had passed. Laura Hilson laid aside her bonnet at Evelyn’s request, and appeared in unusually good spirits. Evelyn quickly regained her composure, and evidently regarded the unpleasant scene which had just taken place as merely an amusing incident. We all drew round the fire, but Mr. Merritt still looked gloomy, and his whole conversation was addressed to Laura, whose tone in replying to him offended me. There was something peculiar in it; something that seemed to say that a species of confidence was established between them—that they were very good friends—and understood each other perfectly well.

When Mrs. Willard returned to the room, it was without Richard; not a remark concerning him was made; but this silent avoidance of a subject is more

ominous than expressed dissatisfaction. I was ill at ease, and my afternoon's encounter rendered me unfit to contribute my mite to the general entertainment. I therefore shortened my visit as much as possible.

Mr. Merritt accompanied Laura and myself home immediately after tea. I afterwards heard that he spent the rest of the evening in the parlour at Fleecer's with Laura.

CHAPTER VI.

"Like other mortals of my kind,
I've struggled for Dame Fortune's favor;
And sometimes have been half-inclin'd
To rate her for her ill-behaviour."

MILMAN.

From the Same to the Same.

November 30th.

THE times are "out of joint" with our friends. Mrs. Willard looks and talks abstractedly — she has some new scheme in her head, of that I am sure; but, as yet, I have no key to the problem she is solving. I have not seen Mr. Willard rub his hands or laugh to himself his strange, low, exulting laugh, since he heard of Richard's return. Ellen is ill both mentally and physically. Mr. Merritt looks care-worn and dissatisfied. When he addresses Evelyn, indeed, or listens to her, his whole appearance undergoes a change; but, at other times, he entrenches himself in his own dignity, and treats even his mother-in-law with the most chilling formality. I have heard, although I know not how the truth may be, that he has been less prosperous in business lately, and that he is weighed down by the enormity of his domestic expenses. I have myself observed that he seems of late totally to have forgotten the disorderly state of his household when Mrs. Willard undertook its

management. He no longer remembers how much he is indebted to her skill, prudence, and economy; and I fear looks upon her, her husband, and the unfortunate Ellen, as a burden which he would gladly loose from his shoulders.

But Evelyn — you will ask — how does Evelyn bear this change? I answer, she has nothing to bear, for her happy temperament prevents her seeing what she could not comprehend. Her's is the only face of that once contented circle which still wears

“ ——— the sunny glow
That laughs on earth and all below.”
* * * * *

December 1st.

Here is a revolution! What it means I leave you to divine. When I returned from breakfast this morning I found Mrs. Willard quietly seated in my chamber turning over the leaves of a book.

She addressed me with “My visit is not to you, Kate; what do you think brings me here?”

“I am sure I cannot conjecture,” I answered very sincerely.

“I will not tax your imagination, for I know that its efforts are not wasted,” replied Mrs. Willard, pointing to my secretary, which even at that hour of the morning stood open. “The fact is, Kate, I do not think it precisely right for us to live with Walter any longer; my *delicacy* will not permit my doing so: I never intended to pay him more than a visit of a few months at the longest.”

She said these words with an air of perfect frankness, and as though she expected me to believe them implicitly, having in all probability forgotten that I had seen the wires of her *marionettes*, and knew in what manner they were played upon.

She continued, but without looking at me as she spoke, “I am going to engage rooms here; I have already heard that Fleecer has several apartments vacant, and *your* being here is sufficient attraction to make me give this house the preference.”

I tried to *look* my acknowledgements, but had too much doubt of Mrs. Willard's sincerity for me to succeed in doing more than *bowing* them.

"What will Evelyn say to this?" I questioned by way of saying something.

"Oh, of course Evelyn must make up her mind to what is inevitable; she cannot suppose that I can devote my life entirely to her; I have another daughter, and other duties. But I must bid you good morning now, Kate, for I suppose by this time Fleecer is at leisure."

She left me with a great deal of *empressement*, and I sat for some time musing upon her strange character, and wondering whether the contented air with which she generally clothes her features could ever be the real garment of her soul. Prythee, what do you think of her? Is there not true female generalship in her manœuvres?

* * * * *

December 3d.

The Willards are here, and so is Evelyn, half the time. Mr. Merritt only made those objections to their removal from his house which absolute politeness required. Evelyn's remonstrances were quickly silenced, and as she has a particular faculty of "making the best of everything," she soon discovered that it was a delightful walk from her residence to Fleecer's, and the exercise which she would now be forced to take for the sake of seeing her mother, would benefit her health.

Ellen has recovered her spirits, or rather has received an acquisition of spirits which she never before possessed. At times she sinks into her former state of inanimate dejection, but the fits are short, and a word or a look rouses her. I cannot say that she has exactly followed my advice, and made charity a source of amusement and a regular occupation. But this is perhaps owing to circumstances rather than to disinclination. Last evening I made some casual allusion to the conversation which took place between us the other day. The blood mounted to her cheeks as she replied:

"Your advice impressed me, but it is not always easy to find what we look for; it may be that I am not in the right train, but I know of no needy persons whom I could benefit. I look at every beggar I meet in my walks and long to speak, but how can I stop in the street? It would look so ostentatious! I am strangely puzzled—but still I am determined to be of use in the world."

I could have guided and advised her, but I knew that I should render her a greater service by making her dependent upon her own resources, and therefore gave a turn to the conversation, which insensibly wound it into another channel.

* * * * *

Afternoon. I have seen him again—we have spoken! I am ignorant in what manner Mr. Elton discovered that I resided in New York, but this morning he honored me with a visit. Imagine how my heart throbbed when my presence was requested in the parlour, and I read upon the card placed in my hand "Ernest Elton?" I was pleased, yet grieved, anxious to see him, yet half inclined to shun the interview.

With faltering steps, yet ashamed of my own weakness, I entered the drawing-room—his back was turned, and his head reclined thoughtfully on his hand; I had time to recover myself before he observed me. The sound of my voice aroused, but I trust that it did not move him so painfully as his tone affected me. For the sake of old friendship I offered him my hand and he took it with grateful emotion. Ah! Elizabeth, there are scenes which words cannot describe—feelings to which no language can give expression—be it enough for me to say that I have seen him, that we have conversed, conversed almost like casual acquaintances; and this is as it should be.

He has just returned from Charleston, and is, I believe, unaccompanied by his wife and children, but I had not courage to inquire after them. I observed that he was attired in deep mourning, and must, therefore, have met with some recent loss. His visit was short,

but to me not so productive of unpleasant emotions as I had anticipated. He has entirely lost his former exuberance of spirits, his ambition, his hopefulness—in short, he is changed—indescribably changed—and wherefore should he not be? I too am not the same.

* * * * *

December 25th.

Would you believe it? Richard has really managed to present "*his friend*," Colonel Damoreau, to his mother and Ellen. The introduction took place last evening. I never saw Richard look so—I will not say *genteel*, but *respectably odd*. He made his appearance in an entire new suit, which I strongly suspect was furnished at Colonel Damoreau's expense.

This Colonel Damoreau is a very different person from what we naturally imagined him to be, judging from his intimacy with Richard. I shall give you but a hasty sketch of him. He is strikingly handsome, his manners polished in the extreme, and his appearance rendered conspicuous by that commanding form and dignified mien which so often characterize military men. He has evidently made the "art of pleasing" his life's study, and is an adept in the science. To say that everybody was fascinated with him, comprehends all that I need add. As for Richard, he listened with as much attention to every word that fell from the Colonel's lips as though they proceeded from those of an oracle.

I can place but one construction upon Colonel Damoreau's intimacy with our curious friend. The Colonel has seen a great deal of the world, is thoroughly acquainted with its ways, and is tired even of its pleasures. He is seeking for something new—something that can divert and excite him. This diversion Richard's peculiarities have doubtless afforded, and he studies our friend's mental developments as he would the physical formation of some strange animal at a menagerie.

Richard was particularly anxious that Evelyn should accidentally join our little circle, and ran to the door every time the bell rang. I fancied that Colonel Damoreau's eyes also not unfrequently turned towards the

door, but Evelyn did not appear. Is it any wonder that Richard should feel proud of presenting such a being as his sister to this stylish friend?

In answer to a question of Mrs. Willard's, the Colonel acknowledged that Evelyn had lately been designated to him in the street, but he made no comment upon her grace and beauty.

* * * * *

For the last two days Ellen has constantly imprisoned herself in her room. How she is occupied, I do not know, for she has so long hidden her feelings in her own breast, that she cannot at once overcome her habitual uncommunicativeness. She is cheerful, and, therefore, I am sure does not pass her time in idleness: that knowledge is sufficient for all but curiosity.

* * * * *

Domestic clouds gather around poor Mr. Merritt, and are daily breaking into showers over his head. Yesterday all his silver was stolen, and to-day, at the hour when dinner should have been prepared, his French cook was found inebriated and extended at full length on the kitchen floor. The key of the wine-closet had been left in her possession, and she was not strong enough to resist temptation. It is inconceivable how slightly Evelyn's gaiety is disturbed by these causes of vexation. Will she always be as careless-hearted and unreflecting?

CHAPTER VII.

"You are not here! The quaint witch Memory sees
 In vacant chairs, your absent images,
 And points where once you sat and now should be."

SUNSET.

From the Same to the Same.

December 4th.

I HAVE just interrupted a *tête à tête* by a *mal à propos* visit to Mrs. Willard; but those I disturbed cannot be more provoked at my intrusion than I am myself. What can be more disagreeable than to feel yourself unexpectedly *de trop* , to wish to retire, and to be forced to remain by the overstrained politeness of the person you are visiting, who insists on your stay, yet wishes you at the greatest possible distance?

As I opened Mrs. Willard's parlour door, I observed her sitting upon the sofa, knitting her endless lace edging, and listening with cool civility to her son-in-law, who was persuading her to give her consent to his wishes, which were apparently much at variance with her own.

"But let me entreat you—why should you object? Indeed we cannot get along without you?" were the words that greeted my ear as I stepped into the room. My first impulse was to withdraw, but Mrs. Willard had already become aware of my presence, and insisted that I should remain. I objected, but she would not listen to an excuse. No allusion was made to the subject lately discussed by Mr. Merritt and herself. For about ten minutes we conversed on different topics; that is, started a subject of conversation in which we took no interest—pursued it with forced energy—turned it on

every side—examined it, amplified upon it, as school-girls in their compositions, and let it die a natural death in spite of our efforts to prolong its existence; then racked our brains for another topic which shared the same fate.

Mr. Merritt was too thoroughly polite to seem discomposed by my presence, but as I pride myself upon a faculty of divining the feelings of those with whom I associate, I thought that I read his, and in less than a quarter of an hour resolutely insisted on retiring.

I have not the slightest doubt that Mr. Merritt is at this very moment entreating Mrs. Willard to return to his house and make it her permanent home; and that she, concealing her secret gratification, is assuring him that she cannot think of doing such a thing, that she never intended to pass more than a few months with him, that she confesses to some pride—too much, indeed, to permit her to be a burden upon those most dear to her.

Then Mr. Merritt will renew his entreaties—she will become more immovable—he will grow warmer in his petitions, and finally she will give a reluctant consent.

* * * * *

Pray admire my clairvoyance—exactly what I described to you took place. An hour ago Mrs. Willard came to inform me that they were making preparations to return instantly to her son-in-law's—that she had for a long time withstood his entreaties, but at last was forced to yield to them, &c. &c. &c. She begged to know my opinion on the subject of her removal; and what opinion could I venture to give, except precisely such a one as she desired to hear?

* * * * *

“Expedition is the soul of action,” says some wise man, and “Amen” responds Mrs. Willard, as she puts the precept in practice. Day before yesterday at noon the idea of Mrs. Willard's returning to her daughter's had not been suggested; yesterday before noon a large spring cart and a carriage stood at Fleecer's door, and Mr. Fleecer himself was stationed in the entry with an

ominous-looking slip of paper in his hand. Upon this bit of paper certain figures were inscribed, which I am afraid Mrs. Willard would be obliged to study the new system of *Mnemonics* to impress on her memory. Just as the clock struck twelve, Mrs. Willard, cloaked and bonneted, descended the stairs, and was greeted by Mr. Fleecer, with whom she exchanged some few whispered words evidently satisfactory to both parties. The portentous paper was returned to Mr. Fleecer's pocket, and Mrs. Willard passed on. Ellen followed her mother, and, with downcast cast eyes, hurried by Fleecer. Poor Ellen! her mother's total absence of sensibility has endowed her with a double portion. I brought up the rear, escorted by Mr. Willard, who carefully divided his attention between a couple of bundles, one in either hand, and myself. Mrs. Willard had petitioned me to accompany them, as my assistance would expedite their arrangements; and she was determined that no appearance of hustle and confusion should greet Mr. Merritt on his return to dinner.

The last trunk was strapped on the cart, the last bandbox stowed in the carriage, and we all took our seats, diminishing our usual dimensions in a manner which permitted us to perform the duty of wedges; between which more damagable baggage was packed.

When we arrived in Union Square, we found Evelyn watching for us at the window. She flew to the door before it could be opened by the waiter; and, too impatient to permit us to alight, leapt into the carriage, and kissed us all in turn, accompanying every kiss with a delighted welcome, and crushing bandboxes, and treading upon carpet-bags and dressing-cases with perfect unconcern.

We commenced unpacking the moment we entered the house. Though Evelyn's mischievous gaiety continually impeded our progress, everything was in perfect order, the entries swept, the trunks out of sight in the attic, and the family circle assembled in the parlour, before the sound of Mr. Merritt's night-key was heard in the lock of the street-door. Mrs. Willard

the entry, and greeted him as a hostess would greet an honored guest.

The dinner passed off gaily, for Mrs. Willard had already paid a visit to the kitchen, and we were all hungry and in good spirits. When I say *all* hungry, I should except Evelyn, for excitement and preoccupation invariably destroy her appetite; when her mind is nourished, her corporeal part fasts without suffering.

In the evening a visitor was announced, who enquired for Mrs. Willard; he was ushered into the drawing-room, and she presented Colonel Damoreau to Evelyn and her husband. Mr. Merritt was evidently struck with the noble appearance of the Colonel, and saluted him as he always salutes a man whom he has made up his mind is a gentleman. Evelyn, as she curtsied, blushed most charmingly; and I did not wonder at her confusion when I remarked the evident admiration which sparkled in the Colonel's dark eyes as he regarded her.

I have seldom seen a man more perfectly at ease in society, or one who possessed in a higher degree the gift of searching out and bringing to light the good qualities of others, than Colonel Damoreau. He is not only witty himself, but has the art of finding wit in everybody else, or rather of giving a brilliant interpretation to casual expressions. His manner almost insensibly inspires you with the belief that your lightest words are worth listening to—you are constantly surprised by discovering that you have uttered some sentiment deserving attention; in short he is endowed with the inestimable faculty of making you pleased with yourself, which is the surest way of rendering you pleased with him. Everything that he says impresses you agreeably, and yet you retain no distinct recollection of any particular sentence or idea—for the fascination lies in the manner, not in the words. Occasionally he is sarcastic, but his sarcasm is sprightly, not bitter. In his most trivial words or actions there is an implied homage, a deferential respect which is particularly gratifying, I think I may say, to *all* women. But

above all, I admire his apparent total forgetfulness of *self*; he forces you to think of him, while he seldom appears to remember his own existence.

I never saw Evelyn more brilliant than she was last evening. She may have been excited by the occurrences of the day; or Colonel Damoreau's manner, which made her constantly feel that every action, look, and syllable was appreciated, may have inspired her—but she certainly surpassed herself. Neither did her conversation consist solely in badinage, her vivacity assumed a new tone; she conversed with enthusiasm on the gravest subjects, and evinced judgment, taste, and more reflection than I imagined that she possessed. If Colonel Damoreau was not charmed, Mr. Merritt was, or his eyes spoke falsely.

I think I may say that the evening was a delightful one to all of us except Mr. Willard. He is unfortunately suffering from dyspepsia, which is attended by a strong inclination to lethargy. Even while he is speaking, his eyelids slowly droop, his hands become powerless, his limbs relax, and he sinks into a species of half-conscious sleep, from which unaided he cannot rouse himself. Mrs. Willard is careful to place herself in a position where she can wake him at short intervals; but if her attention is diverted, the spirit of heaviness again possesses him, and he is quickly overpowered. It is a question in my mind whether persons who have some great object in life, which induces mental activity, are ever subject to this *new*-fashioned complaint called dyspepsia.

CHAPTER VIII.



“Je suis sage mais peu sévère
Philosophe, mais amoureux.”

Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

New York, December 7th.

HERE I am, Fred, in the great city of Gotham, and you may forthwith give up all idea of my joining you in Washington for the present. “Hum—some new entanglement!” I hear you exclaim. Precisely so, my dear fellow—what else could you expect from the wretched *ennuyé* with whom you parted company two months ago?

A man must live, and it is my maxim that he should live, not as *fast*, but as *much* as he can; that is, collect and concentrate into the small space of his life as much enjoyment as is practicable or possible. What the plague are our five senses good for unless we can inhale pleasure through every one of them, and create around us an atmosphere of exhilarating delight? I have tried to do with these five fine senses of mine all that could be done by way of cultivating and gratifying them to the utmost, and yet I fall a victim to *ennui* oftener than the moon changes.

There are a great many good things in the world, but there is one better than all, worth all the rest melted down into an essence that could be sucked in like exhilarating gas.

“the garden was a wild,
And man, the hermit, sighed 'till woman smiled.”

You know my old failing? A pretty face and a pair

of bright eyes give me no inclination to become an anchorite. But I have grown fastidious of late. The finest taste is palled by overfeasting—and susceptibility itself becomes unsusceptible through unlimited use.—Once upon a time, but my stiff and thrifty beard was downy then, I would reply spontaneously to every sweet (feminine mode of warfare.) But now I find myself too often equally insensible to

“ the flash
That lightens boldly through the shadowy lash,
And the sly stealing splendors almost hid,
Like swords half sheathed, beneath the downcast lid.”

Something new, and peerless, and supremely fascinating can alone penetrate the armour of indifference in which my heart (against my will) has entrenched itself. But, to the point,—for I suppose you suspect that the armour has lately been proved vulnerable — I have surrendered without even standing a siege, laid down my arms, cried peccavi and permitted myself to be taken prisoner. But such a jailor — I may well exclaim with the imprisoned Corsair,

“Methinks my jailor’s face shows wondrous fair.”

By the by, the quotation is, for more reasons than one, not at all inappropriate. The beautiful Evelyn is hardly less dazzling, less impassioned, less ardent, than the fiery and voluptuous Gulnare; then, like Gulnare, she is *another’s*, and owns a lord whom, as I think, she neither loves nor hates — although in all other feelings she is ever in extremes.

I have studied women so long and so scientifically, that I know *their signs*, and may, without vanity, pride myself on a certain facility in reading characters, for I seldom find myself in error.

This Evelyn is the most *piquante*, the most bewitching young creature that in all my wanderings I have ever encountered; at least I think so now, although I plead guilty to having thought the same of some dozen fair ones before. Such lips — rich, fresh, pouting with stealthy invitations. Such hair — not shining merely, but reflecting a focus of sunbeams. Such eyes — but

their colour I never could discover, for they change from blue to brown and from brown to black with every meteor-like flash that darts from beneath their lids :

"Oh! where's the heart so wise
 Could unbewildered meet those matchless eyes?
 Quick, restless, strange, but exquisite withal
 Like those of angels—*just before their fall!*"

That description was certainly written for Evelyn, or rather Evelyn was formed to suit the description. Then her hands and her feet are so fairy-like. I never could endure the most divine-looking Hebe if she had not dimpled hands, taper, rose-tipped fingers, filbert nails, Cinderella feet, and ankles to match.

Do not suppose that like a youth enamoured for the first time I am going to rhapsodize all day over her perfections, although I must mention one more. Her laugh—do you know that my heart has two or three times regained its freedom at the sound of a woman's laugh? Evelyn's is almost the only laugh I ever heard that was perfectly musical and full of unmingled joyousness; the freshness of her spirit speaks forth in its tone.

Yet this fair Evelyn, whom I have described as so matchless in her loveliness, possesses not all the charms that a few years will give her. I can only compare her to some luscious fruit that has grown in the shade and is still unripened. Let the vernal sun shine upon the fruit and it is mellowed, its flavor enriched, and its hue deepened—so let the hot sun of Passion touch Evelyn and—but you can conceive what resemblance she would bear to the fruit. As yet her heart is in its virginity, there are a thousand springs unsealed within it, a thousand feelings unawakened, that wait but the talismanic touch of Love to spring to life.

Her husband, Mr. Merritt, is a fine gentlemanly fellow, rather inclined to uxoriousness, but too sensible to make himself ridiculous by becoming jealous.

The manner in which I became acquainted with Evelyn is somewhat curious—but Chance has always made me her favorite, and I thank her for her preference—always taking due advantage of her partiality.

One morning, about a week after you left me, I felt remarkably dull and ennuyé, and was just locking up my dressing-case, after determining to leave New Orleans that very day, when I overheard an angry altercation in the entry near my door.

“You must come with us, sir,” said a voice in a tone of authority.

“How dare you address such language to me?—Do you know who I am, sir? Take off your hands or I shan’t think too much of exterminating you! I’ll teach you to know a gentleman when you have the luck to see one!”

“If you can’t discharge this little account, you must come along with us, and unless you can give bail you will be sent to prison, that’s the short and long of it.”

A scuffle ensued, drowning the indignant reply, of which I could catch but a word or two. I opened my door, more to seek diversion than from curiosity, and beheld a most curious-looking individual vigorously struggling with a couple of constables and crying out: “Let me tell you that I’m a gentleman—do you take me for a loafer? I belong to one of the highest families in New York—I’d have you know *that*—This insult won’t pass unnoticed!”

The oddity of the young man’s appearance amused me. I have sometimes strange impulses, and would give any price for a *new sensation*: this new sensation I produced in myself, and paid for, by Quixotically defending this odd individual and paying his bill!

He cancelled his indebtedness by calling me a “*gentleman*,” an “*independent fellow*,” and his “*noble benefactor*.” The last term, I candidly confess, induced me to carry out my philanthropy by inviting him into my room. He immediately placed himself on the most familiar footing with me, and in a very roundabout way, interlarding his narrative with parentheses, told me his history.

I learnt from this relation that his name was Willard, that he was a “*New Yorker of family*,” as he termed it, that he had a beautiful sister, not seventeen, who was

lately married to a wealthy merchant; that this new brother-in-law had paid his expenses to Texas (as I infer to get rid of him); that in Texas he felt like a "fish out of water" and the burden of his song was "home, sweet home;" that he determined to return, but his funds not holding out he had walked from Nachitoches to New Orleans, intending to trust to luck for further provision. In spite of this fact, with almost idiotic improvidence he took up his lodgings at the St. Charles'; as you are aware the most expensive hotel here. In all probability he was fearful of losing his character *as a gentleman* if he contented himself with humbler accommodations.

I was so much diverted at this narration, the strange style in which it was delivered, and the unquestionable originality of young Willard, (not to mention his enthusiastic description of his sister,) that I really committed the absurdity of inviting him to become my travelling companion. We made the journey to New York together, and I never once regretted my choice of a *compagnon de voyage*, for my friend is a most admirable buffoon, and kept me alive the whole way.

When we arrived in New York it was necessary that we should part company, as I did not relish being joined in Broadway by a person of so doubtful appearance as Richard Willard Esq., of constable memory. I found the greatest difficulty in cutting his acquaintance. If I affected great coldness of manner, he would very innocently inform me that I was in the dumps, or ask me what crotchet I had in my head. When I politely requested him to excuse me, stating that I desired to be alone, he assured me that he would not in the slightest degree interrupt my occupations, that he was a deep thinker, liked to get a quiet moment for reflection, &c., &c., and forthwith gravely ensconced himself in an arm chair and commenced his meditations. I was on the point, as a last resource, of quarrelling with him, when a lady of most surpassing beauty was one afternoon pointed out to me in the street. I discovered that her name was Mrs. Merritt, formerly Miss Willard — this

then was the matchless Evelyn, my curious friend's sister! The sister of Richard Willard, my travelling buffoon! I could hardly believe my senses.

I was soon convinced that I was not in error, and instantly changed my mind about cutting my quondam friend. The next time we met I accepted his proposition to introduce me to his mother, and provided Richard with a suitable wardrobe for the purpose. I must mention by way of illustrating his character that this wardrobe in less than a week found its way piecemeal to the pawnbroker's, and Richard again appeared in the cast-off suit of some obliging friend.

I found Mrs. Willard a very lady-like, agreeable, worldly woman, not at all deficient in "the *savoir faire*" necessary to making an appearance in society. Her eldest daughter has a twisted spine, an interesting face and pleasing voice; but Evelyn, the second—with whom I have more lately become acquainted—Evelyn, so peerless and so perfect——The deuce take it! Fred, I wish you were in love, so that sympathy might give you patience when I sit

"Wearing my hearer in my mistress' praise."

Next to falling in love, you would most oblige me by letting me choose the object of which you are to become enamoured. Take a trip to Charleston, and seek out a bewitching little French girl, (or rather half Italian and half French), called Claudine. You will find her dwelling with a deaf old grandame, in a small, white cottage, embowered with fine trees, just without the city—a most romantic retreat. The cottage, by the way, was one of my own choice—I purchased it for Claudine's accommodation about six months ago. I was then in a state of delectable infatuation, but the illusion was gradually dispelled, my heart consequently disenthralled, and I informed Claudine that an unavoidable business-engagement would separate us. She is a fiery little creature, and had been fool enough to run away from her old father at my solicitation. When I talked of even a temporary separation, her grief and indignation became so

violent that it bordered on madness. Once or twice I pacified her by promising to remain; but as I have no taste for a virago style of beauty, my chains daily grew heavier, and I determined to free myself of their weight.

One morning before she was awake I left the house, and Charleston an hour afterwards. My trunks and baggage were left behind, that her suspicions might not be aroused. I have not heard of Claudine since, but took care that she should not trace me, for she is quite capable of making the attempt. As I have some latent tenderness for the little fool, I should not be at all unwilling to consign her to your care. If you have no better amusement on hand, a trip to Charleston may benefit your health.

I must once more repeat that you may give up all hope of seeing me in Washington at present. It is doubtful how long I may remain in New York. Should you make up your mind to join me, my head-quarters are at the Astor-House. Capital living here, my dear fellow; Stetson never kept a better table than he does this autumn. I make a point of eating three hundred and sixty-five good dinners every year, and should consider myself cheated out of one of the principal, necessary, and allowable enjoyments of life, if I had to swallow a bad one.

Upon my word I can't conceive of any reason why a man should not cultivate his taste as well as any other of his senses. It is my creed that a person cannot really possess refined intellectual taste, unless the perception of his palate is quick and delicate. It is a national fault with us Americans that we *feed* instead of eating. A Frenchman makes the knowledge of *la cuisine* a regular study, part of his education, one of his necessary accomplishments; and he is right. A neglected sense is like a diamond worn in the pocket; a man might as well be without it.

Apropos of *la cuisine*, I tried my own hand in cooking mutton at the Astor yesterday, and concocted the most delicious dish that you ever tasted. There was Matthews, and Maffit, and Pierson, and Walters — they were all

dining with me, and would touch nothing else. I sent for a chafing-dish, and cut the mutton in thin slices—rare, remember that the mutton *must* be rare—poured a little gravy in the chafing-dish, added about two wine-glasses of filtered Croton water, (never drink water unless it is filtered), then laid in the delicate slices of mutton, added three large spoonsful of currant-jelly, and stirred the whole together with a couple of glasses of sherry, two of port, and two of champagne. The wicks were then lit, and I cooked the mutton, slowly turning it twice in a minute. The odorous flavor of the steam that floated about my dilated nostrils every time I lifted the cover, made my mouth water, as it does now at the recollection. Be sure you try it; I intend that it shall be designated as “mutton à la Damoreau,” for the receipt is of my own invention—indeed I may call it an *improvisation*—and a most successful one it was.

Fare thee well, and consider thyself indebted to thy friend for thy to-morrow's good dinner. It is just about the hour when I shall find Evelyn at home, and her spouse not yet *chez lui*, so I must e'en bid you adieu.

Yours, very faithfully,

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

CHAPTER IX.

“None knew nor how nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer’s mind.”

BYRON.

From Katherine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

December 13th.

ELLEN’S unaccountable love of solitude is explained. Accident has transferred her well-guarded secret to my keeping; and I, for very safety’s sake, forsooth, must commit it to yours. I was invited to dine *en famille* with the Merritts and Willards yesterday — but this is an incident of so frequent occurrence that I hardly need mention it. Just as we seated ourselves at table, Ellen, who had not made her appearance, sent word that we must not wait for her, as she had no appetite, and begged to be excused from coming down. Mrs. Willard, who informed me that Ellen had as usual been shut up in her chamber all day, did not appear to be in the least concerned on her account. I, on the contrary, felt so uneasy, that before the second course was served, I rose from the table, and in spite of a disconcerting look from Mr. Merritt, (who cannot tolerate a breach of etiquette), made the best of my way to Ellen’s chamber.

I knocked twice, but no answer was returned. I tried the door; it was unlocked, and I entered, but not without alarm. Ellen was sitting with her arms folded upon the small table before her, and her head bowed over them. An open box of paints and a glass of discoloured water stood near, and pencils, paint-brushes, and several fanciful designs, partly completed, were strewed around her. She quickly raised her head at my approach, as though prepared to resent the intrusion; and I saw that her eyes

were swollen and her cheeks moistened with unregarded tears.

When her eyes met mine she turned away and resumed her former disconsolate attitude.

"Ellen! my dear Ellen! what has happened?" said I, trying to take her hand.

She shrank from my touch, and replied without again looking up, "Nothing: I only desire to be left alone; I shall not prove very agreeable company."

"Permit me to be the judge of that," I returned. "If you only banish me for my own sake, I may venture to say that you will please me best by allowing me to remain."

"But I prefer to be by myself," answered Ellen, rather peevishly, at the same time repressing a rising sob.

I rose and replied, "Since my presence can no longer give you pleasure, I will not force my company upon you. But, dear Ellen, you do not know of how great a happiness you have deprived me, in making me feel that I have lost the power of soothing, and advising, and sometimes comforting you."

I slowly retreated towards the door as though about to retire; but Ellen was roused; she was willing to suffer herself, but her kind heart would not inflict pain. "Stay! stay!" she exclaimed, weeping, and stretching out her hand towards me.

I needed no second invitation, and tenderly grasping her offered hand, held it between both of mine as I seated myself beside her.

"Now, Ellen, tell me frankly, what is the matter with you?"

"I—I hardly know; I believe I have got the *blues*—I often have them!"

"The *blues*! The blue devils!" I ejaculated, almost laughing. "Have you forgotten the good text, 'Resist the devil and he will flee you?' Now the imps which flee soonest through stout resistance are these same *blue* imps. Receive or encourage them for a moment, and they will assault you periodically until they have gained perfect mastery over your spirit."

"You are half jesting with me," answered Ellen, seriously. "But mine is no fancied, no ideal distress."

"You mistake me; I think the distresses of the mind as real to the mind, as the ailments of the body are to both body and mind. But you should not give way to either; even physical sufferings may sometimes be combated by resistance, and often alleviated by a mental remedy."

"Dear Miss Katherine, you do not know how horrible is this sensation which overpowers me, and which people call the *blues*. When the feeling comes over me, I am perfectly miserable without a cause; or else I seek out causes of misery which I had forgotten. I am discontented with everything and everybody. Everything seems 'flat, stale, and unprofitable.' Everybody appears stupid and lifeless, or flippant and heartless. I take no interest in the occupations that most delighted me before. I see no beauty in the objects I most admired. My own feelings throw a sad colouring over all creation; and everything looks harsh and cold, and unalluring. Ah! you do not know how dreadful a thing it is to be subject to the *blues*."

"Indeed, my sweet Ellen, I *do* know, for the disease is a very common one, and one which I have experienced and successfully combated. It arises partly from physical, partly from mental causes. By a strict attention to the laws of nature, and an avoidance of their most trivial infringement, the physical causes will be removed. The mental can even more readily be counteracted by any occupation which interests the mind."

"But when the fit is upon me, occupation has no charm."

"Still you must force yourself to be employed, and through this very self-control your mind will, little by little, regain its usual healthy tone. An interesting book, especially one of an elevated character, is often an antidote to the *blues*. But you would find a surer and I may say infallible cure, by devoting yourself to the promotion of another person's happiness or in projecting some mode of benefiting others. If I were a physician, and one

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virtue of necessity and confess everything. After the conversation which took place between us in your room some weeks ago—do you remember it?"


I replied in the affirmative.

"After that conversation," continued Ellen, "I determined that I would no longer be idle. We are poor, and I have often been wounded to the quick to think of the manner—but no matter for that, you know what I mean. Well, I conceived the project of trying to make myself independent, that is providing myself with the few necessaries of life without running in debt for them, or availing myself of Evelyn's generosity. Then I longed to have a few shillings of my own which I could bestow in charity if I pleased. I did not know what I could do, but determined *to do something*.

"One day as I was walking along the street, reflecting on this subject, I read on a large sheet of paper hung up in the window of a book-store, "Painted Valentines, and Christmas note paper, with original designs, wanted." I always had a taste for sketching and coloring, and had received some little instruction in drawing. I wanted to enter the store, but had not the courage, and after hesitating some minutes passed on.

"The next day I argued with myself until I gained resolution to walk into the shop and enquire what price would be given for the paintings. The bookseller requested to see some specimens of my skill before he employed me. I returned home and the same afternoon carried him all my best performances. He turned them over rather coldly, as I thought, for I stood tremblingly watching him, and finally said that I might paint him half a dozen valentines with original designs, and that he would pay me a shilling a piece, *if he liked them*. He furnished me with paper, and I went to work the very next day. I found some difficulty in drawing the designs, and it was a week before the six valentines were completed, although I expected to execute them in a couple of days.

"With greater diffidence than ever I conveyed them to the bookseller, but hardly had sufficient courage to



submit my work to his inspection. Finally I did so, and, to my great surprise, he seemed pleased, and said that he would give me as much employment as I chose for a month to come at the same price.

"I have already made a couple of dollars in this manner, and I am sure that I never held silver in my hand which was so prized. The little sum seemed like a fortune, or the herald of one; and the simple dress which it purchased me is worth all the others that I possess.

"The designs in your hand are some which I have lately commenced but could not finish, for I have already grown wearied of them, and my invention is at an ebb. Perhaps it is that which gave me the *blues*!"

"But, prythee, where are your blue devils now, Ellen?" asked I significantly.

"A good and loving spirit has exorcised them!" she answered throwing herself in my arms.

Ah! Elizabeth, wealth, homage, even love, could not have purchased me the exquisite joy of that moment!

"May one venture into the council chamber?" said a voice at the half-open door, and without waiting for a reply Evelyn glided into the room. After taking the first few steps she stopped, and surveyed us with mingled archness and affection, exclaiming: "What a tableau! Ellen there looks like the 'fair penitent' obtaining absolution for her first sin; and you, *Carissima*, you only lack a cowl and monk's robe to be mistaken for a saintly confessor, a spiritual adviser, and ghostly comforter! Excellent! you have given me an idea! Why can we not amuse some of our friends with *tableaux vivants* on Christmas eve? That would be so delightful! You must all help—I shall press everybody into service—what a charming idea! Come—come down and we will arrange our plans. I ran away just as they were serving dessert. Walter began to look wrathful at my flight, but I left him in good hands—Mamma will force him to accept the olive branch before I return. Come! come! follow me!—we can discuss the dessert and the tableaux together."

Evelyn flew down stairs, and in a few moments Ellen

and I joined her in the dining-room. Ellen's cheerfulness was perfectly restored. Indeed she was much livelier than usual, and at every sprightly word she uttered a small, but harmonious voice within me—the voice of an approving conscience whispered: "Thou hast done this! Hast thou not cause to rejoice!"

Evelyn immediately introduced the subject of the tableaux, and without much difficulty obtained her husband's permission to conduct them as she pleased. They all—even Ellen—seemed to enter with more spirit into her projects than myself. I have observed of late a marked change in our lovely Evelyn's character. It seems impossible for her to exist except under the influence of excitement—this excitement she continually creates for herself, and her mind is constantly nourished with this high-seasoned and stimulating food. She is even more wildly gay than ever, even more restless, and far more variable, for at times she sinks into fits of moodiness and her usually beaming face wears an expression of absolute wretchedness. To fly from this fancied or real—but at all events merely momentary misery—she seeks the most engrossing species of amusement; and yields herself up to the exhilarating delight of the moment, without remembering the reaction which invariably ensues.

My mind is filled with indefinable forebodings as I watch her, for I have commenced to doubt the reality of her felicity. Her joyousness resembles the sunbeams that sparkle on the surface of the waters, but not the pure and golden vein that glides beneath its bosom. Yet why should she not be happy? She is in the first bloom of youth, surpassingly beautiful, she has not a wish ungratified and—last and best of all she is beloved, and the faces about her, reflect and multiply her smiles. When shall she find happiness if not now? Where, in this life, if not here in the bosom of her idolizing family?

It was positively decided that on Christmas eve a series of tableaux should be represented, and that all Evelyn's friends should lend her their assistance. Among those who were to take part in the representa-

tions, she mentioned Amy Ellwell, Laura Hilson, and Colonel Damoreau.

The latter has become a constant visitor at Mr. Merritt's, and is looked upon quite as a friend of the family. It is impossible not to like him while we like what is agreeable and engaging. Yet I can hardly say that reason sanctions the approval which our hearts involuntarily yield. He is evidently a sensualist, although highly intellectual. This, at first blush, will seem like a contradiction, but not so much when you remember that to be *intellectual* does not imply to be *spiritual*—sensual and spiritual he could not be, but to be at once intellectual and sensual is not incompatible.

I never heard Evelyn mention his name except in the most casual manner, and yet I have repeatedly remarked that she distinguishes his ring from that of any other person, and that the rich bloom deepens on her cheek and a soft lustre fills her eyes, as his step approaches. She thinks of him then—thinks of him perhaps too frequently, and his coming awakens some decided emotion either of pain or pleasure? I do not like unspoken thoughts—when the heart is on the lips its impulses are not to be feared; the instant that its holy recesses are involuntarily veiled, some feeling has penetrated them which prudence or modesty forbids to be revealed.

Do not for a moment imagine that Colonel Damoreau pays particular or unwarrantable attentions to Evelyn. I believe him to be a man of honor, and there is an evident purity and trustfulness about Evelyn which only a fiend could assail. He never particularly singles her out, but is equally agreeable to everybody present. He has but one habit with which I am disposed to find fault. He sometimes speaks, both to Evelyn and Ellen by turns, in that dangerously melodious *sotto voce* which renders his words inaudible to all but the one for whose ear they are intended. At such times his expressive eyes are filled with a softness almost voluptuous, and I feel that that tone and look exert an influence inexplicable, and it may be as *pernicious* as powerful. I have great dread of these

“Whispers scarcely heard
And murmurs breathed against a lady’s ear.”

We have not been troubled with Richard’s visits of late, and for this good fortune, I have no doubt, we are indebted to the Colonel. What means he has employed remains to be discovered, but he is certainly entitled to our hearty thanks.

CHAPTER X.

“Oh! power of youth to feed on pleasant thoughts
Spite of conviction! I am old and heartless!
Yes, I am old—I have no pleasant fancies—
* * * * *
The sober truth is all too much for me.”

COLERIDGE.

From the Same to the Same.

December 27th.

THE saddest moment of our life—the saddest, though unembittered by any positive sorrow! Ah! Elizabeth, has thy heart never, unquestioned, whispered to thee, “thou canst know no sadder hour than this?” Thus spoke mine when I first realized that the prismatic hues which tinted the lowliest objects in life were but the reflected brilliancy of a youthful imagination—when I saw the roseate light of inexperience and hope, that colored the present and veiled the future, gradually disappear, and the grey mist of reality slowly spreading itself over the once enchanted ground. And thus spake my heart when with aching eyes I beheld

“charm by charm unwind
That robed mine idol,”

and I looked in vain for the virtues, the noble attributes that I had worshipped, as we can only worship that which is great and good.

Change! Change! There is nothing which strikes such a cold chill to my heart as the thought of change inward or outward, (for one brings the other,) I dread all change!

Patient friend! Can you pardon this long prelude which merely ushers in a very commonplace fact? Fleecer's is decidedly the most conveniently located boarding-house in New York for those who desire to make any stay in the city; what then could be more natural than that Mr. Elton should have selected it for his residence? And what can be more natural than the change which time has wrought, at once upon his mind and person? Again and again I ask myself, can that furrowed brow, lined with the deep scars of passion, care, and disappointment, have once been the smooth open front upon which my eyes delighted to dwell? Where is the resemblance in those thin, compressed lips, to the bland, smiling mouth indelibly pictured in my memory? Are those restless and sunken eyes the same that were once luminous with hope and radiant with love? But these would be nothing were it not for the inward change of which they are but the signs.

Mr. Elton had resided here several days before I learnt that he was a widower. But the coveted wealth for which he had sold himself, and bartered the happiness of one whom he had professed to hold dear, is now wholly his. That wealth has only purchased him fifteen years of misery, for so every lineament of his altered face proclaims.

Although the son of humble parents, he was always ambitious; and when he found that his prepossessing exterior, and the remarkable endowments of his mind, won him universal admiration, that ambition became insatiable. He had high aspirations, and longed for—he scarcely knew what. In the political world, and in the world of fashion, he earnestly desired to hold a conspicuous position—he wished to visit Europe, to become a patron of the arts, and to enjoy all the advantages of a man of wealth. This wealth he possessed not, and without wanting the energy, he lacked the industry and

perseverance to acquire a fortune. Ambition had not at the age of twenty-five wholly closed his heart against softer emotions, and association gives birth to affection. He loved, or thought he loved one in whose society his earliest years were passed, and with whom his first joys were connected. He loved—and alas! the love of such as he could not long be unreturned. After a passing struggle between ambition and affection, he was even betrothed to the object of his passion. Short was that betrothal, and sad as short. His hand had hardly been accepted when he became acquainted with a lady, reputed to be an heiress, who was making a transient sojourn in Springfield. She was neither young, nor lovely, nor—but peace be with the dead—what they were *not* we must pardon, and none but God knows what they *were*.

Almost from the moment that Mr. Elton became acquainted with this lady, his manner towards his affianced bride underwent a remarkable transition. He lost the desire to please and she the power. True, he would have fulfilled his engagement, he would never have forsaken her, but his coldness and abstraction in her presence made her too keenly feel, that

“Vain it were that honor kept
Sacred the vow it early made;
Or Pity, like a Phantom, wept,
O'er the dark urn where love was laid.”

It was for her to sever the tie between them. And she dissolved that cherished bond without a reproach, but with a breaking heart, and many a concealed pang. He accepted his liberty, and a few months brought the news of his marriage with Miss R——, the young lady whose wealth first rendered him inconstant.

And the one whom he had forsaken—did grief kill her? No. The branch that bends breaks not. She bowed her heart, full of sadness as it was, to the will of Heaven, and lived on, though life's golden light was shadowed. She lived in sorrow, but there was no *bitterness in her grief*, for it was unmixed with self-reproach. *She could no longer live for herself*, for her heart could

know no second spring, its withered flowers no annual bloom, but she could live for others—and her life was still, though many thought it not, *a life of use*.

Elton, through his short career, has met with a continuous series of disappointment—his projects have been defeated, his health impaired, and one drop of gall—the memory of the past, has embittered the draught which, ere it was held to his lips, he thought was nectar. I am sure of this, though it has only been told to me by his countenance, not with his lips. His hand is once more free, and he is rich; the wealth for which he bartered his youth and peace of mind, may now purchase him a young and lovely wife, but can happiness thus be bought? Enough, and too much of these sombre reflections, this grave retrospection. Every sigh should be followed by a smile, and if you have given the tribute of a sigh to the above little history, I shall crave a smile for what follows, while I relate to you our Christmas eve amusements.

I told you that about ten or twelve days ago, the project of giving a Christmas entertainment with *tableaux vivants*, first entered into the fair Evelyn's head. The idea once started, her energy of character would not permit it to be banished by the obstacles which she had to surmount. The difficulty of procuring suitable persons to assist in the representations, the trouble of preparing costumes, and the fatigue of superintending the whole arrangements, she looked upon as follies. And these, like most troublesome undertakings, were but trifles to one who had the spirit and perseverance to render them such.

We spent the afternoon and evening in discussing the *tableaux*, and attempting to make a selection of striking scenes from the writings of celebrated authors. Mr. Merritt joined in the conversation and interested himself with our plans, although he positively resisted all Evelyn's urgent entreaties to take part in one of the pictures. The tone of his refusal seemed to say that he could not thus compromise his dignity; and argument was vain. On Colonel Damoreau's opportune appearance.

our consultation soon gained new spirit. He had seen *tableaux vivants* both in Europe and America—assured us that they were a fashionable amusement amongst the English nobility, and that he was thoroughly initiated into all their mysteries. We listened to his explanation with the most flattering attention, and the Colonel was suddenly placed on a footing quite as intimate as a long and tried friendship could have procured.

He proposed that one tableau should represent a scene from Byron's *Corsair*, remarking that the oriental costume would be highly becoming to Evelyn as *Gulnare*, and that if they could find no worthier *Conrad*, he would himself personate the *Pirate Chief*. He might have added, what no doubt we all of us did mentally, that the dark and manly style of his beauty was particularly suited to the character.

Evelyn instantly improved upon his proposition by suggesting that a series of tableaux from the *Corsair* might be successively represented, illustrative of the whole poem, and that the passages from which they were taken might be read aloud as the curtain rose.

This suggestion met the general approval, but although I could not offer any reasonable objection to the whole proceeding, I did not exactly feel pleased. It is not that I do not admire the works of Byron—I admire them for their power, their sublimity, their earnestness, and the intensesness of the passions they portray, and yet I do not rise from their perusal better, and happier, and more elevated in spirit. There is a touch of mildew on every leaf—he weaves the poisonous nightshade into a garland of beauty—and while the hues of the flowers dazzle the eye, their breath contaminates the soul.

It was soon finally settled that the principal tableaux represented should be a series from the *Corsair*. Colonel Damoreau was to personate *Conrad*, Amy Elwell, *Medora*, Evelyn, *Gulnare*, and Mr. Merritt, after great persuasion, and probably encouraged by Colonel Damoreau's example, consented to enact the *Pacha*.

I pass over the days of preparation, the tireless activity with which Evelyn daily proposed, planned, and

executed; and the frequent visits of Colonel Damorcau whose assistance we found invaluable. The day before Christmas came, and ushered in a cloudless morning. I had intended to devote that day entirely to my friends, for I knew that my services would be in requisition. I was, however, unavoidably detained, and it was one o'clock before I reached Union Place.

I found Evelyn almost too busy, too animated and too excited to salute me. How beautiful she looked! Hers is that rare beauty not dependent upon the adventitious aid of dress, but which becomes every garb in which she can robe herself. I found her attired in a maroon coloured merino wrapper, with collar and cuffs of dark blue velvet, her waist loosely girdled with a dark blue silk cord. Her luxuriant hair, which inconvenienced her when it floated on her shoulders, was carelessly gathered in one bright mass, and knotted on the very top of her head, and for further security, a gay coloured Madras handkerchief was fastened over the imprisoned tresses and coquettishly tied beneath her rosy chin.

When I entered, she had just completed the arrangement of the huge gilt picture frame which was erected on a platform directly in front of the folding doors. She then carefully commenced covering the inside of the frame with several widths of black illusion lace, neatly joined together. This lace, which is so thin as to be almost imperceptible, gives a misty and unreal appearance to the figures grouped behind, and by means of its illusive effect, the tableau bears strong resemblance to a painting.

Mrs. Willard was suspending a curtain of flowered brocade between the doors, and Ellen, who, although she could not personate any character, took an active interest in the preparations, was sitting on a low stool, counting over the passages which it was her duty to read as the curtain rose.

When Evelyn had completed the arrangement of the lace, she looked up at me and cried out, "Come, Carissima, don't stand there as idle as a queen! Use your

hands, use your feet, ~~use~~ your head — what are they all good for? We are all of us using ours!"

With these words she darted out of the room, and throwing off my hat I followed her, but not quickly enough to assist in carrying a large clothes-horse which she was dragging into the parlour. In vain I endeavoured to remonstrate, and begged that she would permit her servants to bring in the two other horses which were standing in the entry. She replied that before her servants could answer the summons of the bell, the horses would be in their appointed places, and decorated with their necessary trappings. In a second she was in the passage again, but this time I was by her side — we brought in the horses, surrounded the frame with them, covered them with dark-coloured cloth cloaks, which, when hung in folds, served as a back-ground of drapery, and arranged the lights on a pair of ladder-steps stationed on one side of the frame, but dexterously concealed from the spectators. On the other side we formed a door with one joint of the clothes-horse to permit the entrance and exit of the characters. The success of the tableau greatly depends upon the proper degree of light and shade, and for this reason the light is only admitted on one side, and stronger from above than from beneath.

These arrangements were hardly concluded when Colonel Damoreau was announced. "What *shall* we do?" exclaimed Mrs. Willard; "we are all in such frightful *deshabille*. We must beg him to excuse us!"

"No, no," answered Evelyn, quickly; "I will see him; he may have some suggestion to make!" and away she ran without even disencumbering her head of the Madras handkerchief, or smoothing her disordered hair.

Colonel Damoreau's visit was rather longer than we could have desired; but as it gave Evelyn an opportunity of resting from her labours, I did not regret his protracted stay.

A few moments after he took his leave, Mr. Merritt returned home, and we were summoned to dinner. For the first time in Mr. Merritt's house we appeared in our morning dresses at the dinner-table. We does not include

Mrs. Willard, who had found, or rather *made*, leisure to attend to her toilette.

• After dinner I endeavoured to persuade Evelyn to lie down and rest; for I knew that she must be too fatigued to sustain herself throughout the evening. But she declared that she could not sleep, nor even keep quiet, and perversely continued her employment.

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And now for the first tableau. A soft and melancholy air aroused the attention of the assembled guests—it

ceased, and the silvery toned bell which had been placed in my trembling hands was gently sounded. The curtain moved, shook, as though unwilling to be disturbed, slowly rose, and gradually disclosed, the exquisite, most life-like, and yet most *picture-like* picture which its folds had concealed. When it had risen to its utmost height, and the first murmured burst of admiration was hushed, a low and tremulous, though unusually distinct voice, which I could hardly recognize as Ellen's, read aloud the following explicative passage from the Corsair:

CONRAD'S PARTING WITH MEDORA.

"She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
 'Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
 He dared not raise to his that deep blue eye,
 Which downcast drooped in tearless agony!
 Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,
 In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;
 Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt,
 So full—that feeling seemed almost unfelt!
 Hark! peals the thunder of the signal gun!
 It told 'twas sunset—and he cursed that sun.
 Again—again—that form he madly pressed,
 Which mutually clasped, imploringly caressed!
 And tottering to the couch his child he bore,
 One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more;
 Felt, that for him, earth held but her alone,
 Kissed her cold forehead—turned—is Conrad gone?"

How can I give you any adequate conception of the tableau of which these lines were descriptive? Imperfect as I feel that my attempt will be, I must endeavour to convey some faint idea of grace and beauty which are indescribable.

The curtain, as it rose, displayed Medora, (Amy Ellwell) half springing from the couch where Conrad had placed her. One hand by which she supported herself, was partly concealed by the swelling of the rich orange hued cushion upon which it pressed, and the other was stretched out imploringly towards the departing Conrad. Her features expressed the most feminine helplessness of *grief*, and her very position bespoke the approach of *despair*. The guitar which she had touched in his absence was lying neglected at her feet. Her long, fair

hair, wholly unbound, stole in loose and waving ringlets from beneath a small Greek cap of blue velvet and silver, fitting closely to her head, and secured by a string of pearls that bound her pure brow. Over a transparent robe embroidered in silver stars, she wore an open tunic of pale blue silk, fringed with silver, and confined at the waist by a girdle of pearls. The drapery that half veiled her arms was peculiarly graceful; from beneath the flowing blue silk sleeve, looped on her shoulder with a band of pearls, floated a thin white one, starred with silver, and falling in shining folds far below her waist. Her full white trousers almost concealed the slender feet, encased in slippers of blue velvet wrought with silver, which peeped out beneath them. Her whole costume was indicative of the womanly chasteness of her character. As I gazed upon this lovely being, (who seemed as though in the midst of her grief she had been petrified to a statue,) so perfect was the illusion, that I forgot Amy Ellwell's existence, and could only feel that it was Medora before me.

Conrad was standing at the foot of her couch, in the act of retreating, but with his face turned back to take the last, longing look of pitying and admiring affection. Well had Colonel Damoreau been chosen to represent Conrad. His hair of "midnight blackness," not fine, but glossy, and curling in close, round rings, about his broad and sunburnt forehead,—the heavy but well delineated eyebrows, that gave at all times an expression of fierceness to his brilliantly dark eyes,—those eyes which were at the same instant full of fire and of softness—the ruddy, parted lips, at one moment bland almost to voluptuousness, and the next compressed with a firmness that bespoke the determination of his character—his imposing mien and commending air—all these were Conrad's own. As my eyes rested upon him I involuntarily repeated to myself:

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His pirate costume was strictly correct; the ric

perseverance to acquire a fortune. Ambition had not at the age of twenty-five wholly closed his heart against softer emotions, and association gives birth to affection. He loved, or thought he loved one in whose society his earliest years were passed, and with whom his first joys were connected. He loved—and alas! the love of such as he could not long be unreturned. After a passing struggle between ambition and affection, he was even betrothed to the object of his passion. Short was that betrothal, and sad as short. His hand had hardly been accepted when he became acquainted with a lady, reputed to be an heiress, who was making a transient sojourn in Springfield. She was neither young, nor lovely, nor—but peace be with the dead—what they were *not* we must pardon, and none but God knows what they *were*.

Almost from the moment that Mr. Elton became acquainted with this lady, his manner towards his affianced bride underwent a remarkable transition. He lost the desire to please and she the power. True, he would have fulfilled his engagement, he would never have forsaken her, but his coldness and abstraction in her presence made her too keenly feel, that

“ Vain it were that honor kept
 Sacred the vow it early made;
 Or Pity, like a Phantom, wept,
 O'er the dark urn where love was laid.”

It was for her to sever the tie between them. And she dissolved that cherished bond without a reproach, but with a breaking heart, and many a concealed pang. He accepted his liberty, and a few months brought the news of his marriage with Miss R——, the young lady whose wealth first rendered him inconstant.

And the one whom he had forsaken—did grief kill her? No. The branch that bends breaks not. She bowed her heart, full of sadness as it was, to the will of Heaven, and lived on, though life's golden light was shadowed. She lived in sorrow, but there was no bitterness in her grief, for it was unmixed with self-reproach. She could no longer live for herself, for her heart could

know no second spring, its withered flowers no annual bloom, but she could live for others—and her life was still, though many thought it not, *a life of use*.

Elton, through his short career, has met with a continuous series of disappointment—his projects have been defeated, his health impaired, and one drop of gall—the memory of the past, has embittered the draught which, ere it was held to his lips, he thought was nectar. I am sure of this, though it has only been told to me by his countenance, not with his lips. His hand is once more free, and he is rich; the wealth for which he bartered his youth and peace of mind, may now purchase him a young and lovely wife, but can happiness thus be bought? Enough, and too much of these sombre reflections, this grave retrospection. Every sigh should be followed by a smile, and if you have given the tribute of a sigh to the above little history, I shall crave a smile for what follows, while I relate to you our Christmas eve amusements.

I told you that about ten or twelve days ago, the project of giving a Christmas entertainment with *tableaux vivants*, first entered into the fair Evelyn's head. The idea once started, her energy of character would not permit it to be banished by the obstacles which she had to surmount. The difficulty of procuring suitable persons to assist in the representations, the trouble of preparing costumes, and the fatigue of superintending the whole arrangements, she looked upon as follies. And these, like most troublesome undertakings, were but trifles to one who had the spirit and perseverance to render them such.

We spent the afternoon and evening in discussing the *tableaux*, and attempting to make a selection of striking scenes from the writings of celebrated authors. Mr. Merritt joined in the conversation and interested himself with our plans, although he positively resisted all Evelyn's urgent entreaties to take part in one of the pictures. The tone of his refusal seemed to say that he could not thus compromise his dignity; and argument was vain. On Colonel Damoreau's opportune appearance,

our consultation soon gained new spirit. He had seen *tableaux vivants* both in Europe and America—assured us that they were a fashionable amusement amongst the English nobility, and that he was thoroughly initiated into all their mysteries. We listened to his explanation with the most flattering attention, and the Colonel was suddenly placed on a footing quite as intimate as a long and tried friendship could have procured.

He proposed that one tableau should represent a scene from Byron's *Corsair*, remarking that the oriental costume would be highly becoming to Evelyn as *Gulnare*, and that if they could find no worthier *Conrad*, he would himself personate the Pirate Chief. He might have added, what no doubt we all of us did mentally, that the dark and manly style of his beauty was particularly suited to the character.

Evelyn instantly improved upon his proposition by suggesting that a series of tableaux from the *Corsair* might be successively represented, illustrative of the whole poem, and that the passages from which they were taken might be read aloud as the curtain rose.

This suggestion met the general approval, but although I could not offer any reasonable objection to the whole proceeding, I did not exactly feel pleased. It is not that I do not admire the works of Byron—I admire them for their power, their sublimity, their earnestness, and the intenseness of the passions they portray, and yet I do not rise from their perusal better, and happier, and more elevated in spirit. There is a touch of mildew on every leaf—he weaves the poisonous nightshade into a garland of beauty—and while the hues of the flowers dazzle the eye, their breath contaminates the soul.

It was soon finally settled that the principal tableaux represented should be a series from the *Corsair*. Colonel Damoreau was to personate *Conrad*, Amy Elwell, *Medora*, Evelyn, *Gulnare*, and Mr. Merritt, after great persuasion, and probably encouraged by Colonel Damoreau's example, consented to enact the *Pacha*.

I pass over the days of preparation, the tireless activity with which Evelyn daily proposed, planned, and

executed ; and the frequent visits of Colonel Damoreau whose assistance we found invaluable. The day before Christmas came, and ushered in a cloudless morning. I had intended to devote that day entirely to my friends, for I knew that my services would be in requisition. I was, however, unavoidably detained, and it was one o'clock before I reached Union Place.

I found Evelyn almost too busy, too animated and too excited to salute me. How beautiful she looked ! Hers is that rare beauty not dependent upon the adventitious aid of dress, but which becomes every garb in which she can robe herself. I found her attired in a maroon coloured merino wrapper, with collar and cuffs of dark blue velvet, her waist loosely girdled with a dark blue silk cord. Her luxuriant hair, which inconvenienced her when it floated on her shoulders, was carelessly gathered in one bright mass, and knotted on the very top of her head, and for further security, a gay coloured Madras handkerchief was fastened over the imprisoned tresses and coquettishly tied beneath her rosy chin.

When I entered, she had just completed the arrangement of the huge gilt picture frame which was erected on a platform directly in front of the folding doors. She then carefully commenced covering the inside of the frame with several widths of black illusion lace, neatly joined together. This lace, which is so thin as to be almost imperceptible, gives a misty and unreal appearance to the figures grouped behind, and by means of its illusive effect, the tableau bears strong resemblance to a painting.

Mrs. Willard was suspending a curtain of flowered brocade between the doors, and Ellen, who, although she could not personate any character, took an active interest in the preparations, was sitting on a low stool, counting over the passages which it was her duty to read as the curtain rose.

When Evelyn had completed the arrangement of the lace, she looked up at me and cried out, "Come, Carissima, don't stand there as idle as a queen ! Use your

hands, use your feet, ~~use~~ your head — what are they all good for? We are all of us using ours!”

With these words she darted out of the room, and throwing off my hat I followed her, but not quickly enough to assist in carrying a large clothes-horse which she was dragging into the parlour. In vain I endeavoured to remonstrate, and begged that she would permit her servants to bring in the two other horses which were standing in the entry. She replied that before her servants could answer the summons of the bell, the horses would be in their appointed places, and decorated with their necessary trappings. In a second she was in the passage again, but this time I was by her side — we brought in the horses, surrounded the frame with them, covered them with dark-coloured cloth cloaks, which, when hung in folds, served as a back-ground of drapery, and arranged the lights on a pair of ladder-steps stationed on one side of the frame, but dexterously concealed from the spectators. On the other side we formed a door with one joint of the clothes-horse to permit the entrance and exit of the characters. The success of the tableau greatly depends upon the proper degree of light and shade, and for this reason the light is only admitted on one side, and stronger from above than from-beneath.

These arrangements were hardly concluded when Colonel Damoreau was announced. “What *shall* we do?” exclaimed Mrs. Willard; “we are all in such frightful *deshabille*. We must beg him to excuse us!”

“No, no,” answered Evelyn, quickly; “I will see him; he may have some suggestion to make!” and away she ran without even disencumbering her head of the Madras handkerchief, or smoothing her disordered hair.

Colonel Damoreau’s visit was rather longer than we could have desired; but as it gave Evelyn an opportunity of resting from her labours, I did not regret his protracted stay.

A few moments after he took his leave, Mr. Merritt returned home, and we were summoned to dinner. For the first time in Mr. Merritt’s house we appeared in our morning dresses at the dinner-table. *We* does not include

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green vest tightly buttoned over his expansive chest; the graceful capote of dark green velvet that covered his head; the Candiotte cloak of fine white wool, lined with scarlet, that fell from his drooping shoulders; the broad red band, studded with weapons, which encompassed his waist, were all calculated to heighten the graces of his person.

While this living picture was still before the wondering eyes of the spectators, a profound silence reigned throughout the apartment. With intense anxiety I watched the statue-like pirate and his lovely bride: not a muscle of his limbs or features moved, not even his eyelids quivered; but I thought that the arm which Medora extended towards him slightly trembled. Before I could be positive of this, a nervous motion of her lips was plainly visible. Provoked at my own hesitation I vehemently shook the little bell, and in a second the curtain descended, and Conrad and Medora had disappeared! Then broke forth one rapturous burst of applause, not merely noisy, but warm and sincere. It was interrupted, but not wholly silenced, by a strain of lively music which sounded from invisible musicians. If I may judge from my own feelings, that unexpected melody prolonged the emotions which the tableau had awakened.

At my signal the music suddenly ceased. The little bell sounded—a deep silence ensued, and again the curtain slowly rose and discovered the Seyd, gorgeously attired, reclining luxuriously upon a silken couch which was slightly elevated above the seats on either side of him. The heavy turban of cloth of gold, glittering with jewels, the flowing beard and dark moustache, so altered his appearance that I scarcely recognized Mr. Merritt. I know not whether it was the effect of the long, bright colored tunic, the full, Turkish trowsers, the slippers on his feet, and the chibouque in his mouth, but there was something particularly effeminate about his appearance. His features, naturally small, now looked more diminutive, and though his face had never struck me as so handsome as now, its style was too womanish to win a woman's admiration.

On either side of him sat a couple of chiefs, in oriental garb, with long beards pending from their chins, and longer chibouques from between their teeth. On the right stood a slave reverently ushering in a seeming Dervise. The arms of the Dervise were folded over his breast with quiet dignity, his noble form was erect, although his head was slightly bent, as if in forced humility. His loose robe, of dark hue, was closely wrapped about him, and on his head he wore the lofty cap peculiar to his sect. Again Ellen's voice was heard, and this time its tone was firmer and clearer.

THE DERVISE.

"High in his hall reclined the turban'd Seyd :
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.

* * * * *

With cautious reverence from the outer gate
Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait,
Bows his bent head—his head salutes the floor,
Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
"A captive dervise from the pirates' nest
Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest."
He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
And led the holy man in silence nigh.
His arms were folded on his dark green vest,
His step was feeble and his look deprest;
Yet worn he seemed by hardships more than years,
And pale his cheek from penance, not from fears."

It was several minutes before the curtain fell, and then the spectators once more loudly expressed their delight, until a burst of martial music drowned the applause.

After a shorter interval than before, the music ceased, and the curtain rose, suddenly and rapidly. The Seyd is starting terror-stricken from his seat, and both hands grasp his scimeter. The chiefs are already on their feet with weapons drawn; the slave is crouching on the ground in cowardly fear, and the Dervise stands menacingly before them. His robe is torn away and cast on the ground, his high cap lies beside it; his head is covered with a glittering casque, and its sable plume floats darkly over his shoulders; one hand, which holds a

bugle, is pressed against his mailed breast, and the other waves a flashing sabre in fierce defiance over his head.

The following is the passage which Ellen read, and the spirited and varied intonations of her voice conveyed the full meaning of her words:

CONRAD UNDISGUISED.

“Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appalled the sight;
Up rose that Dervise—not in saintly garb,—
But like a warrior bounding on his barb!
Dashed his high cap and tore his robe away!
Shone his mailed breast, and flashed his sabre’s ray!
His close, but glittering casque, and sable plume,
More glittering eye, and black brow’s sabler gloom,
Glared on the Moslem’s eyes; some afrit sprite,
Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.”

The curtain fell, and the martial music grew louder and more warlike than before. Once again it ceased, and again the curtain ascended, neither as rapidly nor as slowly as heretofore. What a tableau! how exquisite! how thrilling! how almost fearful! Ellen read:

CONRAD’S RESCUE OF GULNARE.

“Quick, at the word—they seized him each a torch,
And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
A stern delight was fixed in Conrad’s eye,
But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry
Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
Knocked at that heart unmoved by battle’s yell.
Oh! burst the harem—wrong not on your lives
One female form—remember we have wives!
But who is she? whom Conrad’s arms convey
From reeking pile and combat’s wreck—away—

* * * * *
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed?
The Harem Queen—but still the slave of Seyd!”

The canvass, or rather the seeming canvass, displayed but three figures. Conrad, in the act of flight, bore the beautiful Gulnare in one arm, and with the other valiantly defended himself against the Turk who pursued him. Gulnare, her large dark blue eyes dilated with terror, clung for protection to Conrad’s shoulder, till her blushing cheek lightly pressed against his armour.

I had often acknowledged the high order of Evelyn’s

charms, but I never before conceived her to be so transcendantly, so superbly beautiful. A splendid turban of emerald green and crimson, interwoven with bands of gold, encircled her transparent forehead. A crescent of diamonds fastened the turban's folds. Her hair was entirely concealed, except one shining tress that waved about each temple, and a stray ringlet that stealthily swept her shoulder. Her under robe of gauze of gold, which reached half way below her knees, shone where the light fell upon it like a web of woven sunbeams. Over this robe, and somewhat shorter, she wore a crimson cashmere tunic, embroidered with leaves that seemed formed of emeralds. This tunic, which was open, disclosed a green velvet vest, fitting closely to her rounded form, and buttoned with diamonds over her bosom. The loose drapery of her sleeves concealed but a small portion of her beautifully moulded and jewelled arms. Her white trousers were confined by a golden band, and their folds gathered together and fastened on the very centre of either delicate ankle by a diamond crescent, similar to the one in her turban; thus not an outline of her miniature feet, with their crimson slippers, pointed on the instep, was concealed. Her costume was completed by a cashmere scarf loosely wound around her pliant waist.

So painfully intense was the pleasure, or rather the admiration, which this tableau excited in me, that I quite forgot my duty as bell-ringer. I know not how long I might have stood gazing in mute astonishment, had not the sigh of some full breast near me, and a cold hand laid unconsciously on my arm, aroused me. I turned my eyes away from the fascinating picture and beheld Mr. Merritt. He was still robed in his Pacha costume, and had concealed himself by my side to obtain a more perfect view of the tableau.

"Is she not—is she not too angelic?" exclaimed he with rapturous emotion.

I made no answer, for I saw that it was time for the bell to give its signal. The curtain descended—but my ear caught the sound of more than one half-suppressed

exclamation of "Not yet! not yet!" as it fell. Several moments passed before the applause which succeeded all the other tableaux was awarded to this. An evidence that the spectators were too deeply impressed to demonstrate their delight. When at last the silence was broken, it was succeeded by ejaculations of pleasure rather than by noisy approval.

Once more the music greeted our ears, but this time the strain was low and mournful. Once more the curtain gradually and noiselessly ascended; and Ellen, in a subdued tone, as though she were afraid of breaking the Pirate's slumber, read:

. GULNARE'S VISIT TO THE DUNGEON.

"He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hushed so deep—Ah! happy if in death!
He slept—who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone, and here he hath no friends.
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?
No, 'tis an earthly form, but heavenly face!
Its white arm raised a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray fall abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to pain—
And once unclosed, but once may close again—
That form with eye so dark and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemmed and braided hair;
With shape of fairy brightness—naked foot,
'That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute—
Through guards and dunest night how came it there?
Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!"

Conrad lay slumbering upon his straw pallet; his manly features were beautifully calm, and a half smile unbent his brow and played about his lips. His head was uncovered, and his shining casque lay near him. The chain which manacled his wrists glittered in the strong light, and in his sleep he unconsciously grasped its heavy links.

Stealthily bending over him, and bearing in one hand a lamp, which she shaded with the other, stood Gulnare. She no longer wore her turban; and the rich tresses of her refulgent hair, partly in ringlets, and partly in braids intermingled with jewels, floated almost to her knees

Her perfect form was enveloped in a loose white robe; and her neck, hardly less snowy, her rounded shoulders and graceful arms were completely bare. Her beautiful eyes, grown softer than before, shone through a pearly lustre, and the expression of her face denoted grief, gratitude, and pity, mingled with a tender feeling.

The curtain fell, and the vision disappeared—for a *vision* it seemed to our eyes, too beautiful to be real.

Solemn and mournful were the notes to which we now listened, and slowly rose the curtain, upon which every gaze was fixed. Ellen read:

MEDORA IN CONRAD'S ABSENCE.

"The sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
Sinks, with its beam upon the beacon's height,
Medora's heart. The third day's come and gone—
With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!

* * * * *

The night breeze freshens—she that day had past
In watching all that hope proclaimed a mast!"

Medora sat in sadness and solitude: her cheek resting on her clasped hands, and her loving blue eyes eagerly strained to catch some object in the distance. Her look was anxious, but gentle, full of fear, yet hopeful, sorrowful, but patient. We could not gaze too long upon this picture, for its soft grace and still beauty were a relief to the heart and the eye, after the more impassioned and thrilling scenes by which it had been preceded.

The curtain descended, and the fair Medora was hidden from our view. But so real seemed her existence, that her appearance drew forth murmured and involuntary expressions of commiseration rather than loud applause.

The music grew bold and almost martial, and the scene was changed. We beheld Conrad in his dungeon. His look was solemn and even stern, and his arms were folded, as we had before seen them, over his breast, but even more firmly. Gulnare stood beside him, with one hand she presented him a dagger, and with the other

commandingly motioned him to follow her. Her lip was proudly curled, and her eye flashed with a fierce, unnatural, almost with a fiendish light. I was startled—I would not have believed that Evelyn's face could have expressed such concentrated exulting hate, such determined revenge. Ellen read :

GULNARE'S SECOND VISIT TO THE DUNGEON.

“ O'er thine and o'er my head
Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread !
If thou hast courage still, and wouldst be free
Receive this poniard—rise and follow me !”

It was a relief to my eyes when the curtain fell. I felt a strange sensation of terror—an indefinable dread of I knew not what. Could Evelyn have so perfectly portrayed these passions if she were incapable of feeling them ?

In a few moments, which seemed an age, the picture was hidden from our view. A melodious, and serenade-like air, which ensued, calmed my feelings. When the curtain again rose, Gulnare, with hands fervently clasped, and her tearful eyes raised supplicatingly to Conrad's face, was kneeling before him. Passion and despair breathed from her countenance, and every vestige of unwomanly fierceness was gone. Conrad's arms were half extended towards her, and the pity with which he viewed her humbled condition seemed not unmingled with a stronger and softer emotion. These were the lines that Ellen read in an impassioned tone.

GULNARE'S ENTREATY.

“ That strange fierceness, foreign to her eye,
Fell quenched in tears, too late to shed or dry,
She knelt beside him, and his hand she prest,
'Thou mayst forgive though Alla's self detest !
But for that deed of darkness, what wert thou ?
Reproach me—but not yet—Oh ! spare me now !”

Long, very long, we gazed upon this vision-like tableau, but it faded at last. Once more, but more slowly than ever before, the curtain rose ; and Ellen, with much feeling, read the following passage :

THE DEATH OF MEDORA.

"His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not, yet foretold!

He turned not—spoke not—sunk not—fixed his look
And set the anxious frame that lately shook :
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain !
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect wither'd there ;
And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd,
In the last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep."

Medora lay extended on a bier, her fragile form—loosely wrapped in the snowy shroud—her hands, one of which held a sprig of white roses, folded on her bosom—her sunny hair, uncurled, was carefully smoothed over her pale cheeks and extended below her waist—a chaplet of white roses, half blown, encircled her brow—her eyes were only partly closed, and a smile seemed hovering about her lips.

Over her bent Conrad, horror strongly depicted on his countenance, but his eyes, muscles, limbs, all fixed in the stern endurance of self-control, the fearful composure of despair.

The picture vanished, and in due time was succeeded by others of a lively nature but hardly less perfectly represented. They were principally illustrative of scenes from the Pickwick papers and Nicholas Nickleby, but my interest was gone—I was abstracted—I could not rouse myself. The new and startling expressions which I had seen portrayed on Evelyn's face constantly rose before me ; the voluptuous tenderness of her eyes in her last scene haunted me ; and unfortunately she did not appear in any of the succeeding pictures to banish the impression.

I performed my duty of bell-ringer mechanically ; and when I was informed that the representations were at an end, I could not have told what passages the three or four last tableaux were intended to represent. I had an indistinct recollection of having been disagreeably affected by the sound of prolonged laughter, and the clapping

of hands, and I remembered to have seen some fantastic-looking figures in ludicrous postures, but that was all.

I joined the company and did not see Evelyn again, until she entered the drawing-room and mingled with her guests. The simplicity of her dress strongly contrasted with the gorgeous Oriental costume which she had so lately worn. She was attired in a pale, peach-blossom silk, unadorned, and fitting admirably to her symmetrical form. Her white and polished neck was uncovered, and the short, tight sleeves reaching half-way to her dimpled elbow, left her arms almost bare. In her hair, which was loosely knotted at the back of her head and fell in thick, rich curls over a silver comb, she wore a single rose, like herself just blushing into beauty. She was more striking in her Eastern garb, more dazzling; but softer, more alluring, more *loveable* in this. I preferred her in the latter attire.

For some minutes I watched her as she gracefully moved amongst her guests, and rejoiced to behold her so calm and gentle. My attention was then diverted by some other object, and I lost sight of her until I accidentally found myself standing directly behind Mr. Merritt and Laura Hilson. Unavoidably I overheard the following conversation which took place between them.

"Why did you refuse to take any part in the performance, Miss Laura?" enquired Mr. Merritt.

"Excuse me if I answer you candidly," replied Miss Hilson with an air of sincerity; "I am no prude — I do not wish to be considered one, but I cannot entirely *approve* of the relationship in which a young and modest woman may be placed in these tableaux towards a young man. Such situations may be productive of evil consequences — and then the ostensible object of these tableaux is to display one's personal charms, and that is revolting to my feelings."

Mr. Merritt's brow slightly contracted, and I saw that the arrow which this wily girl had artfully shot was already rankling in his heart.

I was about to change my position when I beheld her lightly touch Mr. Merritt's arm with her fan, and heard

her whisper in a lively but malicious tone, "Look! Conrad is determined to consider Medora virtually dead and devotes himself entirely to the fascinating Gulnare! And she, never forgetting that she has killed her lord and master, the Pacha, feels at liberty to receive and return his homage. How admirably they play their parts! Doubtless they have so far lost their own identity in the characters of the fair Slave and fascinating Pirate, that they do not remember that the representation is at an end."

I looked in the direction towards which Laura turned her eyes, and beheld Colonel Damoreau standing beside Evelyn, with the rose which had lately graced her hair in his hand. It had probably fallen to the ground; and from his action, I imagined that he was entreating her to permit him to keep the flower. She held out her hand to receive the rose, and I watched her with tremulous anxiety to discover whether she would insist on his returning the token. He whispered a few words—she smiled, blushed, drew back her hand, and Colonel Damoreau tenderly laid the withering flower between the leaves of his pocket-book.

I turned to Mr. Merritt, his countenance was blanched—his eyes flashed—the demon of jealousy was roused in his bosom and struggled fiercely with his affection. He dared not approach Evelyn—his fear of becoming ridiculous withheld him—he dared not by words betray his emotion, even to Laura—he could only suffer and madden with the thick crowding fancies that thronged his brain.

And Laura—the usually bold expression of her eyes grew bolder and more triumphant—I shrank from her look and hurried towards Evelyn. Before I reached her she had taken Colonel Damoreau's arm and was led to the head of a cotillion which was just forming.

I remained as near her as possible. When the cotillion closed Miss Hilson whispered a few hasty words to the musicians near whom she was standing, and they instantly commenced playing one of the Straus waltzes. In the next moment Laura was at Evelyn's side, and I

heard her exclaim: "Why does not any one waltz? You waltz, Evelyn, dearest, do you not?"

"With me, I hope?" replied Colonel Damoreau in a low and entreating tone, which seemed to say that she would afford him inexpressible happiness by an affirmative answer.

Ah! that Evelyn could have possessed the talismanic bracelets of Caliph Soliman, which apprized their owner of the approach of danger! Why did no good spirit give her an instinctive perception of the evil influence that encompassed her? And did it not? The guardian angel's warning voice was drowned by the wild strain of pleasure—the angel spoke, but she heard not its tone.

The glance which I gave her was useless or unnoticed; Evelyn placed her hand in that of the Colonel, his arm lightly encircled her waist, and in another instant they were floating together in undulating circles around the apartment—keeping time to the music, not with their feet only, but with the movement of every limb, and the throbbings of every pulse.

I looked in vain for Mr. Merritt—neither he nor Laura was visible—yet I was certain that he saw and felt—felt too much, for I knew that his designing tormentor was by his side.

CHAPTER XI.

“How far that little candle throws its beam,
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.”

SHAKESPEARE.

From the Same to the Same.

December 29th.

BEHOLD me writing to you *en robe de nuit* and night-cap! It is near midnight, but the Liverpool coal with which my little grate has lately been replenished blazed so invitingly, that I could not withdraw myself from the genial influence of its warmth. Then the cold wind that shook the window-panes seemed with a hoarse voice to cry out, “Enjoy thy comforts—not all possess them! To thy hearth I find no entrance, but the windows and doors of many a wretched hovel have not barred me out as have thine.” This was not all, for the scenes through which I had passed this afternoon, continually rising before me, banished sleep; and I could think of no relief for my burdened mind but that which flows from my pen as it darkens the paper destined for your eye alone. And therefore behold me ensconced in a cushioned arm-chair, defying the approach of slumber and midnight—at my secretary.

I had hardly seated myself at the dinner-table to-day, when a slip of paper was placed in my hands, and I with difficulty deciphered the following lines hastily scrawled with a pencil:

“Dear Miss Katerine,

Do not linger in the parlor when you have dined; I have something especial to say to you—I am upstairs—

I am not alone—and I hope you will not be surprised by the appearance of so strange a visitor as the one I bring.

Yours in haste,

ELLEN."

{ I should not have been a daughter of Eve and an heir }
to curiosity, if these unsatisfactory lines had not destroyed my appetite. I immediately discovered that I was not hungry, and withdrew.

In my chamber I found Ellen anxiously expecting my appearance. On looking round the room in quest of the visitor whom she mentioned, I beheld a little girl shivering over the fire and stretching out her benumbed and purple fingers until they came almost in contact with the blaze. The child might have been nine years of age, but suffering and want had given to her sharp and pinched features, an expression which was suitable to one much older, while the undeveloped delicacy of her form bespoke her to be still in infancy. Her feet were bare—her little, feeble limbs were covered with rags—rags that had long been strangers to the purifying properties of yellow soap and the sparkling Croton.

I never remember to have seen the countenance of a child upon which premature misery was so strongly depicted. Even the keen winter air had failed to summon a shade of color to her wan face: her cheeks and temples were strangely sunken: a dark ring surrounded her heavy blue eyes, and the flaxen hair that hung from beneath her old straw bonnet was thin and matted together in fantastic meshes, which proclaimed that it had seldom been disturbed by either comb or shears.

I smilingly approached her, and her blue lips parted as though to return the smile, but at the same time her brow involuntarily contracted, and the eyes which she raised to mine expressed habitual fear and distrust.

I patted the child on the shoulder, and drew Ellen towards the window, that we might converse unheard. Ellen was evidently excited and at a loss for words.

"Who is your little friend," asked I.

"I do not know—that is, you see who she is—a beggar!"

"And you have been looking out for a beggar to befriend for some time," replied I laughing, but not unkindly.

"No, yes, that is to say, accident threw this child in my way."

"Would the same accident have induced you to take as much interest in her two months ago?"

"No; but my views are changed."

This was exactly what I desired to make Ellen realize. I was now ready to hear the history of her adventures.

"I was going to look for mother in her room," began Ellen, "you know she keeps in the basement, and, therefore, I was obliged to pass the kitchen. I heard Betty speaking very loudly and angrily to somebody, and the voice of a child replying in supplicating tones. Betty told the child that they did not keep their cold victuals to pamper beggar's brats, and that if she did not make herself scarce, somebody would show her the way out in double quick time, and in a new fashion. The child still lingered, and I was strongly inclined to enter the kitchen, but, to tell the truth, Miss Katerine, Betty is a great scold and I did not like to come in her way. I went into mother's room thinking of the child, and in a few minutes I heard the door close after her. I ran out and found her sitting sobbing upon the cold stone steps, with an empty basket by her side. I looked round and nobody was near; I questioned her, and she told me that she had been travelling about all the morning to gather cold victuals for her mother, and her old grandmother, and her blind father, and that she had not even obtained a crust of bread. She gave me such a pitiful description of her family's condition, that I thought if her story was true, that—that—"

"That you might render them some assistance, and thus render yourself happy?"

"I thought," continued Ellen, without noticing my interruption, "that I would bring the child to you and ask

your advice. So I went back into the house and put on my hat, and—”

“Took up your purse,” added I, pointing to the little green net purse in Ellen’s hand, a very unusual appendage to her walking attire.

Ellen looked half inclined to burst into tears, and I felt that my jest, though well intentioned, was inappropriate if not cruel.

“Pardon me, dearest Ellen,” said I; “my ill-timed pleasantry is not an evidence of want of feeling; and to prove to you that it is not, I will tell you what we must do. This child’s story may be true, and it is possible that it may be false. If false, it has been taught to her by some older person who makes begging a profession. We should do the child a lasting injury by making her a gainer through falsehood; and indiscriminate alms-giving is always dangerous. We will, therefore, accompany her home and inquire into the real condition of her family.”

“That is just what I expected of you!” cried Ellen delightedly. “I was afraid to go by myself, and I knew how kind you were!”

We had no time to lose, for our winter afternoons are but short. My warm cloak was soon wrapped about me, my hat on my head, and in a few minutes more Ellen and I were following our young guide through the streets. A heavy snow had fallen and the weather was piercingly cold. It made me shiver to see that child tottering with naked feet over the frozen snow. She led us through several narrow, winding streets, principally remarkable for their accumulated filth, the wretched appearance of the domicils, and the various odours that almost overpowered us as we passed along. We encountered troops of half-naked, dirty children throwing snow-balls, sliding on the frozen gutters, screaming and fighting with one another—herds of ruffian-like men, smoking on the steps of the numerous grog-shops that lined the road, and now and then the sound of an oath reached our ears. There were women, too, half clad, and the impress of want and vice strongly stamped upon their hardened features, the

appearance of all—alike denoted the most squalid poverty, the most abject degradation. The glances of these people more than once alarmed us, for we seemed moving among a different order of beings. I took the precaution to read the names of the streets which we traversed, for many of them I had never before visited.

At last our young guide stopped, and looked if we were following her. We quickened our steps, and she disappeared in a dark and narrow alley through which we tremblingly threaded our way. The alley led to a wooden back building in a most dilapidated condition. We followed the child up a flight of decaying stairs, that cracked beneath our feet, and found ourselves under a long shed hung with clothes-lines. These lines were covered with every description of rag that could be made to assume the shape of a garment. The child pushed open a door which I had not at first perceived, and we entered into a small close apartment, from which the surrounding buildings excluded every ray of the sun's reviving light.

The room was so dark that for a few moments, my eyes, unaccustomed to the sombre shade, took no note of its occupants.

"Mother, here's ladies!" said the child; and a woman, whose back was towards us, while she bent over her wash-tub, turned round, and after a look of surprise, gravely curtsied to us, and called out, "Dan, Dan, give your chair to the ladies!"

These words were addressed to a man, apparently in the prime of life, who was sitting upon one of the only two chairs which the room contained. His hands were stretched out upon either knee, and his head rested upon his bosom, as though he was in a state of half stupor or sleep. His limbs were lusty and well proportioned, and his ruddy countenance showed no traces of illness. He raised his head when the woman spoke, and looked towards the door by which we entered; but I marked that his dull grey eyes did not exactly rest upon us, and that as he handed the rickety chair, he seemed uncertain where it should be placed.

I walked forward and took the chair. He retreated at my approach, stretching out his hands to feel for the wall against which he leaned himself. Ellen had taken her seat upon the other uninviting chair, and while the woman was wiping her hands upon the corner of her apron, I glanced round the room.

In one corner lay a heap of chips, shavings, and bits of decayed wood piled up against the wall. The fire on the bare hearth, if such dying embers embedded in ashes, could be called *fire*, was, I perceived, entirely composed of these chips, and remnants of old window frames, boxes, bits of sticks, and similar substitutes for fuel. In another corner lay several pots and kettles in rather close contact with various articles of clothing. A table, which evidently served as dresser, dining, and ironing table, was covered with earthen plates, an iron or two, a candlestick, several bottles that appeared to contain medicines, a basin and pitcher, and in fact the greater portion of the cooking and other utensils, all huddled together. Old hats, paper, and rags, took the place of window panes, and effectually obviated all necessity for curtains. Very near the window stood a cot; and above the scanty and tattered covering which was carelessly flung over it, peered out the yellow and withered face of a very old woman. A straw bed lay on the floor, but this uninviting couch was empty, although still unmade. The wash-tub stood on a rough plank supported by two old kegs, that enabled it to perform the offices of a bench. Beside it sat an infant little more than a year old, playing with a parcel of stones and sticks that were strewed at its feet. The appearance of this famished-looking babe shocked us, as well it might. The wretched little creature's limbs seemed to be dropping from their sockets—its tendril-like arms were hardly thicker than one of my fingers, and the shrivelled flesh hung in wrinkled bags about them. The sharp bones of its ghostly little face protruded like those of an aged person; and its large black eyes seemed starting from its head.

The child gave a low cry at our appearance, and the

woman who had first addressed us, seated herself upon the foot of the bed, and took the infant in her arms. I then remarked the child's seat, which showed that maternal tenderness had called forth the ingenuity of even these wretched creatures. The lid had been removed from an old candle-box, and a piece of old rag carpet cut in strips was carefully nailed in its place. The carpet, which yielded even to the light weight of the child, made a more comfortable seat than a cushioned chair; and several wisps of straw wound round one of the kegs formed a support for the infant's tender shoulders.

Ellen and I had hardly seated ourselves when the querulous voice of the old woman in the bed cried out, "Who's there? Who's there, Nancy?"

"Some ladies who came home with Netta," replied the woman, whose appearance, I forgot to say, was much less slatternly than I expected to find in the abode of so much want.

"We don't want no ladies here, coming to preach to us while we be starving. What did the grand folks ever do for us with their fine talk! all their palavering never paid the price of a mouthful of meat."

"Hush—hush, mother!" whispered the woman; and after adjusting the bed-clothes to conceal their rents, she turned to us and said in an apologizing tone; "She is very ill."

"Has she been ill long?" questioned I.

"It's three months on New Year's day since she's been out of that bed—its the cold and bad victuals did it—and, mayhap, a fever she took."

"Have you no physician?"

"Bless you, yes ma'am, the doctor from the Dispensary came once or twice; but there's no good in doctors! It's only suffer the more he made her, with all his nasty apothecaries' stuff, and not a whit of good did he do her or the child neither! And then he said it was nothing but the years pressing upon mother, and that she was doing well enough."

"And you have had no means of taking care of her?"

"Faith, and it's just that same. It's a year and more

since my old man there, lost the use of his eyes, and took some sort of pains in his head, and all over him—the rheumatics they call it, and he’s never been a bit of good, or done a turn since. At first, I went out amongst the neighbors and got a job here and there; and Dan minded the baby, and waited on mother; and Netta, Netta’s the little girl, went out for cold victuals, and to pick up chips and rubbish from the carpenter’s shops, and from the houses that are getting pulled down; and when I came home at night, I sat up and did the washing, and put all to rights. But Babby took sick, and not one would he quit crying with but myself; and the old man grew worse, and mother wasn’t able to mind them, so I had to bide at home. I tried to get washing or sewing, but ladies’ folks won’t employ the likes of us, and all I get to do is some odd pieces to wash for the neighbors; and sometimes they pay me a shilling or two, and sometimes they hav’n’t got it to pay. And my shawl, and best gown, and Dan’s coat, and even the bed-clothes went one by one to the pawnbrokers. And if it hadn’t have been for Billy and Netta, and the soup and the potatoes Netta brought us from the alms-house, there’s no knowing what would have become of us.”

While the woman was speaking, the infant on her lap every once and a while raised its little shrivelled hand, and patted her cheek, and looking in her face put up its lips to kiss her. And she, more than once, paused in the midst of her narration, and with moistened eyes gave the sought-for kiss; and the child quietly nestled its head on her bosom, as though contented with this token of remembrance; but at short intervals it uttered a low half moan most piteous to hear.

Netta had crept up to the fire and thrown on a handful of shavings, and was sitting doubled up upon the hearth, regardless of soot or ashes. The husband was still leaning against the wall, apparently listening to what we said; but his open, expressionless eyes imparted a vacant look to his countenance, which rendered his thoughts difficult of perusal. The old grandame had risen up in her bed and sat staring at us with very unloving glances.

"You have doubtless seen better days?" said I to the woman.

"Ay, and that I have, nor never thought to see the likes of these—but God knows what's coming, and it's a stout back that can bear all its burdens. It's from the county Longford we came, and Dan had a shop, a kind of a grocer shop there, and sold spirits, and did a thriving business; and John McClure, that's my sister's husband, was his partner. And John was a light man and never kept long to anything, and he did the shabby thing. One day he said he was going to see his wife in the country, and, unbeknown to Dan, he drew for all the money that Dan had in the bank, and took every rag that he could lay hands upon away with him. And where he went nobody knows; but it broke our business up, and sister she died, and sure it was a heavy heart that killed her and nothing less."

The poor creature stopped and wiped her eyes with her apron, and Dan turned his face to the wall that his irrepressible emotion might be concealed from us.

"And we had four children and mother to take care of," continued the woman; "and we heard the neighbors tell what a fine place America was, and how folks prospered here; and that there was plenty of living for all. So we sold everything to get passage money, and came over. And sure we found it was lies they were telling, for the place wasn't a bit better than Ireland, nor half so good; for potatoes ben't so cheap, and as for getting work, it wasn't easy finding for a stranger. Two of the children took sick and we buried them both, for I don't think the air agreed with them so well as in the old country. Then this little one came to take their place, and soon after Dan lost his sight, and troubles came by the bushel full."

"Surely you have had medical advice for your husband?"

"Sure and we have, but where's the good in it? He went to some great eye doctor here—I can't call to mind his name just now, and he gave him a little bottle not larger than your finger, full of stuff to bathe his eye

with, and then made him pay a dollar, the very last he had, for it. And when he went again, the doctor up and told him that he must bring him five dollars next time, and that he couldn't even talk to him 'till he'd done that same. So Dan came away and never went back, for where was he to get the five dollars? Then when he got so bad he couldn't see at all, somebody told him that it was the Dispensary he must go to—and he hardly able to stir with the pain in his limbs. 'Twas I took him to the Dispensary myself, and the doctor talked kind enough like to him, and gave him medicine and washes for his eyes; and so now I take him there every Saturday. But I never saw any good come out of doctoring, and Dan's as blind as a bat, though he don't look it, and ever will be, unless the Lord himself helps him."

"And we must hope that he will," I replied; "but as he ever helps those who help themselves, we must make use of every means placed in our power to——"

"Now she's at it!" shrieked out the old woman from the bed. "I knew it! She's going to preach just like the other fine ladies, and go away without giving us anything to fill our mouths with but her fine palavering—I know them!"

I thought it best not at present to notice the remarks of the old woman, and continued my conversation with her daughter, by enquiring if she had any children?

"Troth and I have, and a treasure of a boy he is—for what could we have done without Billy? Billy was my first, and, bating a few odd ways, a better boy never saw the light—a blessing on him! If it wasn't for Billy, its starved we'd all have been, and that long since."

"What does Billy do to support you?" asked I.

Before my question could be answered, our attention was diverted by the sound of hasty steps ascending the stairs. In another moment the door was rudely flung open, and a ragged urchin about eleven years of age rushed into the room. He was a stout, bold-looking little fellow, and carried a bundle of cheap publications wrapped in a coarse piece of leather, under his arm. One eye was so much swollen and discolored, that the ball was

hardly visible, and blood was streaming through the hand which he held to his forehead. He stopped suddenly on beholding us, as though surprised, and, for a moment, bewildered.

"Billy!" exclaimed his mother, "what has happened ye?"

I was astonished that her tone expressed so little alarm, but I suppose that she was too much accustomed to similar accidents to be much affected by them.

"Mark did it!" replied the boy, recovering himself. "Just be after tying a rag round it, mother, will ye? Don't stand, for I want to be off like a shot with these here books, or I shall get another before I'm a day older. I shouldn't have come home at all, at all, but the blood wouldn't hold up, and I couldn't do much business in such a pickle."

The woman instantly commenced wiping, not *washing*, away the blood from her son's head and face, and prepared to bind up the wound with an old rag, strongly resembling a dish-clout. Her only question, (which she asked in a perfectly composed tone,) was, "What was Mark after doing to you?"

"Why he was a flogging me, to be sure, for not having sold all my books, and such lightning as he kindled out out of these here two eyes was a *caution*, as the Yankee boys say. Then I tried to get clear of him, and he knocked me against a lamp-post and broke my head."

"The beggar's brat!" growled the old grandmother. "It's what he's always doing to you, my jewel! Bad luck to him, and to you for being such a lazy loon!"

"And good luck to you, Granny, and may neither of our wishes hit!" replied the boy, with humorous quickness.

I felt desirous of knowing something more about this stout-hearted, saucy, little fellow; and, approaching him to examine his wound, asked, "And who is Mark, my little boy?"

"Mark! Lord a mercy," replied he, looking wonderingly into my face; "don't you know Mark? Mark the *smasher*, to be sure—it's he I mean."

"And what is a *smasher*?" questioned I.

The boy burst into a loud fit of laughter, ejaculating, "Well if she isn't a green one!"

The mother undertook to answer my question, and gave the following not very lucid definition of a *smasher*—the smashers being a class of the community with whom I was until then unacquainted.

"Why Mark's a smasher," said she, "and they call them *smashers*, you know, because they *smashes* the boys when they don't do their duty. Mark was a newspaper boy himself while ago, but luck went with him, and now he's got a stand—and Mark buys a whole heap of them books that Billy's carrying—and Mark he's got a lot of boys, and he gives every mother's son of them so many books to sell in a day, and then at night he pays them two shillings for the job. And if they don't contrive to sell all their books, he gives them a flogging, and half kills them sometimes. And then if the people buys all the boys' books early enough in the day, the boys goes and buys books for themselves, and sells them on their own hook, and makes a profit of their own."

"Are there more smashers than Mark?" asked I.

"Lord bless you, yes, ma'am, a sight more; but Mark's the greatest smasher of them all, and has made a power of money, and he's got a house all of his own, and he got a cab, and he's——"

"Mark's the smasher for my money?" cried out the boy, enthusiastically. "He can lick anything."

"Or *anybody*," said I, somewhat inclined to correct the young book-verfder's phraseology.

"I say he can lick *anything*!" replied Billy, emphatically; "nothing can stand before him—he'd give a boy a knock that'd send him through the floor like smoke, and leave nothing of him but a grease-spot! Mark's the smasher for me! He keeps the corners clear of loafers!"

I began to be interested in Mark and his subjects; and, turning to the mother, inquired, "what does he mean by keeping the corners clear?"

"Why, you see, ma'am," said she, with a smile almost of pity, at my ignorance; "you see the smashers give every boy his corner about the streets, or his post on the

docks, and if another boy comes and tries to sell his books or papers on that corner, the two gets into a fight, and if the one that the place belongs to can't lick the other, he goes to his smasher, and he comes and smashes the boy so, that he'd never put his spoon in that mess again."

"But what right has one boy to monopolize a corner and keep off every other boy? He can't purchase the right, can he?"

"Lord bless you, no;" exclaimed the mother; "it's the might that makes the right. His smasher gives it to him and tells him to stand there, and so it's his: and nobody can gainsay him, unless he's got a stouter fist, and then the strongest gets it."

Billy, from the moment he had discovered my ignorance, had regarded me with an air of superiority and ineffable disdain, which his ragged coat, and gashed head, and swollen eye, rendered supremely ridiculous. He now exclaimed with a knowing shake of the head, "Your mother don't know you're out, does she? I'm a thinking you'd better be going home!"

And so thought I, for the daylight was fast fading away. I turned to Ellen and found her intently examining the books which Billy had laid upon the bed. I also glanced at the titles and read, "The Mysteries of Paris, by Eugene Sue;" "Mathilde;" "Arthur;" "Balzac's Tales," &c.

Billy now snatched up his books and telling his mother that he had all those to sell before he could come home to-night, and without taking any further notice of Ellen or myself made his exit as unceremoniously as he had entered.

I whispered to Ellen that it was time for us to take our leave. Ellen instantly drew out her purse and silently emptied its contents into the hand of the mother. Hers was true generosity, true charity, for she gave the widow's mite—not of her abundance, but "*all she had.*" But though her generosity was genuine, it was not wise—and this I did not hesitate to tell her. The poor are seldom economical, and had she supplied the wants of

these people, by a judicious expenditure, she might have done them more good than by placing at their own disposal double the amount of money she now bestowed.

The old grandame's eyes sparkled as she heard the jingling of the silver, and she muttered, "then it's a jewel she is, and no shame to her poor broken back—the Lord love her!"

The mother, on receiving this money, overpowered Ellen with a true Irish superfluity of thanks. Ellen blushed and knew not how to answer, or which way to turn, and only hid her confusion by attempting to play with the baby.

I addressed little Netta, who was still crouching in the ashes, and told her to call the next day on Ellen, and that she should be supplied with cold victuals; for Ellen had already informed me that she intended to entreat her mother to place all the cold victuals at her disposal. The child promised to come, but her meagre little face was lighted with no ray of joy; it seemed as though her blood was too completely frozen to glance through her veins with the quick flow of pleasure.

We took our leave, promising that this should not be our last visit, and were followed to the bottom of the steps by the grateful mother. She blessed us with tears streaming down her cheeks, and hugged her baby to her heart as though she was internally saying, "God has sent thee a friend—a friend, my little one!"

Once more in the street, we found it much darker than we anticipated. But Ellen was too much engrossed with pleasant thoughts to experience the least fear, and I did not venture to suggest the possibility of our not reaching home in safety.

Before we had walked a block she suddenly pressed the arm which was linked within hers, and exclaimed, "Oh! Miss Katerine, if I could only diffuse happiness throughout such a wretched abode as that, I am sure I should never have the blue-devils again! I never before felt such inexpressible pleasure as I do at this moment!"

What wonder that her pleasure was too deep and heartfelt for expression? She had, for the first time in

her life, experienced that most exquisite of sensations—the interior joy which springs from the performance of a good deed, dictated by unselfish motives!

We talked over our plans for the assistance of the poor family, and Ellen said to me with more energy than I had ever seen her display; “I must exert myself—I can never earn enough money by painting Valentines and New Year’s favors. Do you know that a thought struck me while we were there? But I am afraid to confide it to you, for you will laugh!”

“If I promise only to smile,” replied I, “perhaps you will be encouraged to trust me?”

“I remarked in looking over those books,” continued Ellen, “that they were principally translations from the French and German—now, dear Miss Katerine, I am a very tolerable French scholar, and I think I can write English correctly. Certainly the persons who make these translations must be remunerated in some manner: they must make some money—more than a person could earn by painting Valentines. I think that I could find some interesting French tale, and I know that I could easily make a tolerable translation. But then how could I be sure of selling the translations when made? The most important part would be the most difficult. But you have so successfully aroused and cultivated my organ of hope, that I am not inclined to despair of anything.”

It is needless to tell you that I gave Ellen all necessary encouragement; for even should her project, of selling the translation prove to be a castle in the air, the occupation thus afforded her mind, would of itself be sufficiently beneficial to repay her for the exertion.

We reached Mr. Merritt’s in safety, but gave no account of our visit to the poor family. Mr. Merritt escorted me home at a late hour. But my brain had become so active, that except for the soporific effect which the penning of these pages has had upon me, (and which perhaps the reading of them will have on you) I should not have slept till morning.

CHAPTER XII.

“The sun is in the Heavens—and the proud day,
Attended with the pleasures of the world,
Is all too wanton.”

King John.

From the Same to the Same.

January 21.

WHAT a day of kindly feelings is the first of the Year ! It is so long since I have spent New Year's day in any city of the Union where it is celebrated, that the merry ushering in of the Year in New York was doubly delightful to me. The poor lay aside their toil, and the rich forget their care. And the lady of fashion receives her guests with almost as hearty a welcome as the tradeswoman. It seems as though an influx of tender and kindly emotions descended from above and entered into men's hearts on this one day, impelling them to banish all bitterness from their souls. And therefore is this day devoted to social intercourse and the interchange of friendly feelings. All petty misunderstandings are at an end—all disuniting coldness, and trivial differences forgotten. The door of every mansion is thrown invitingly open—every face is radiant with smiles, and every hand is grasped with warmth, although it may not have met ours for a twelvemonth before. If there is one spark of neighborly love in the heart, it must be fanned into life by the genial influence of New Year hilarity : the breast that is cold on that general jubilee must indeed be loveless.

As I have but few friends in the city, I accepted a seat on Evelyn's sofa, and an invitation to assist in receiving her visitors. The blazing fire gave an air of

comfort to the elegant apartment. The *colour de rose* curtains shed a roseate light throughout the room. Mrs. Willard in her close, quaker-like, most becoming new cap, and her plum-coloured silk dress, falling in rich folds round her feet, sat with her back to the shaded window. I half suspect that the youthful clearness and softness of her complexion was produced by a cosmetic of her own concoction; and that she was not wholly indebted to nature for the unusually brown tint of her hair. But these are mere matters of surmise, for it is possible that the color of her hair, and the texture of her skin vary with the weather.

In one corner of the sofa sat Ellen—I took my place beside her. Evelyn had chosen her seat apart. She was sitting upon the eastern divan that, encircled by its luxurious satin cushions, stood in the midst of the room. Her face was unusually pale, and robed in her snowy dress with the wreath of natural white chrysanthemums twined about her head, she might have represented the presiding genius of the day.

Upon a side table stood a silver salver furnished with wine-glasses and various kind of cakes, wines, and liquors. In addition to these refreshments, Mrs. Willard's hospitality, or, housewifely pride, had provided a more substantial collation. The folding doors, thrown invitingly open, displayed a table in the back parlor, handsomely decorated, and crowded with perigords, pies, gelatines, *pate de foix gras*, sandwiches, jellies, and every other delicacy for which room could be found. Nor were hot coffee and chocolate forgotten.

We were all assembled in the drawing-room before ten o'clock, for gentlemen who have one or two hundred visits to pay during the day must perforce commence at an early hour. The front door, as is customary, was flung open to give instant admission to the visitors. In spite of this precaution, we were surprised while taking our seats, to hear the bell ring. The waiter who answered its summons, a moment afterwards entered the parlor bearing a beautiful little rustic basket covered with geranium leaves. He presented the New Year's offer-

ing to Mrs. Merritt. Evelyn delightfully received it and we all thronged around her to assist in removing the leafy coverings. Beneath lay a silver cornucopia studded with diamonds, a ring and silver chain were attached to the cornucopia, and it contained a bouquet of the most exquisite green-house flowers. On one side, within a crescent formed of diamonds, was engraven the single word "Evelyn."

I remarked that the flowers were entirely white, and that Evelyn also wore no color. Could this have been merely a coincidence? Evelyn's cheek flushed with pleasure as the bouquet passed from hand to hand, and we all wondered whence it came. I at first thought that the donor was Mr. Merritt, but Evelyn bore his New Year's gift, an emerald bracelet, on her arm. The crescent on the cornucopia reminded me of Gulnare's dress in the tableaux; and the present was obviously from one who witnessed and admired those representations. But this afforded us but a slight clue, for a large number of Mr. Merritt's friends had been present, and the tableaux won very general applause.

While we were still examining the bouquet, the enlivening sound of merry bells greeted our ears. Rapidly flew the winged sleighs over the new fallen snow. And now the trampling of hasty feet was heard ascending the front steps. We all rose to receive our visitors who crowded in, and, "A happy New Year!" "A happy New Year!" followed by the shaking of hands, resounded from every side. Healths were drunk, the collation tasted by some, the cake crumbled, not eaten, by others, and the guests disappeared again, giving place to newcomers, who passed through the same ceremony. Very few remained over five minutes, but many friendly compliments could be interchanged in that short space of time.

Most of our guests made a bustling entré, with the salutation of "Happy New Year," on their lips. But some few aspiring individuals despised this olden form. One young favorite of the muses, (as he believed himself to be, because he had bribed an editor to give the world

one of his rhapsodies in print,) stalked up to Evelyn, on entering, and pointing to the ceiling and the carpet, exclaimed:—

“The bridal of the earth and sky!”

Another gentleman, who from his sanctimonious air, I knew to be a “pillar of the temple,” ejaculated as he made his appearance; “Heaven hath blessed the day, blessed be the year!”

Then came Richard, crimsoned with excitement, and agitatedly elbowing the crowd that surrounded his mother and sisters. Once at their side, he audibly saluted them in turn, and not without discomposing their dresses by his rude embrace. After this ceremony, he deliberately flung himself upon the divan, beside Evelyn, and said that as there were not many visits he thought worth paying, he would stay and see the “folks.”

In vain his mother attempted to convince him that the presence of the gentleman of the house was never expected on similar occasions, and that a brother stood in the same relation as a host. He acknowledged the compliment, said that he felt himself there in the capacity of host, and resolutely kept his seat.

Evelyn’s conversation was constantly interrupted by his strange remarks, and puzzling queries. His familiar address, and grotesque appearance, elicited general and ill-disguised astonishment; still *there* extended full length upon the divan, he reclined! Mrs. Willard now stationed herself immediately in front of him, that he might be concealed from the view of a large number of her guests; but at each new arrival, he pertinaciously drew aside the folds of his mother’s dress, and his long, sallow, face quizzically peered out from behind them.

As a means of getting rid of such immediate proximity, Mrs. Willard lured him into the back parlor to partake of the collation. She left him seated at the table, confident that he was provided for during the next half hour. But his meal was short; just as she was receiving some of the most fashionable of her friends, she found him at her side again.

He resumed his seat on the divan, and with his mouth full, stuttered out "capital liver complaint that goose died of, pity it warn't a fashionable disease with the geese of this country. I like your patties of goose-liver very much, only they're so confounded dear, it wont do to walk into one every day."

Mrs. Willard now, angrily, insisted on his taking his leave, and to our great delight he prepared to obey. We were rejoicing to behold him stepping over the door-sill, when he suddenly ran back again, and called out in a loud tone—"Evy, by-the-by, haven't seen the Colonel to-day, have you? Splendid fellow, aint he, Evy? Just the man he'd have been for you! He beats Walter hollow! You're a great favorite of his, I can tell you *that*, and he's pretty squeamish and particular too about whom he likes. He and I are the greatest cronies in the world; if I meet him, I'll send him to you—good-bye—happy New Year!"

Richard took his leave, and Mrs. Willard breathed freely again

Although Mrs. Willard and Ellen and I were extremely merry, Evelyn was not as lively as usual. She looked anxious and expectant; and I observed that every time the door opened, her eyes glanced in that direction, and her face brightened. And when the visitor entered, a cloud as though of disappointment, passed over her features. She has grown capricious, and strange, and variable—indeed, she is quite incomprehensible!

Could it have been Colonel Damoreau for whom her expectant eyes were searching in vain? That it *was* he I felt convinced when towards the close of the day he entered the apartment. Evelyn, who was wearied, and now received her guests sitting, instantly started up. Her cheek, brow, and neck, crimsoned, and the hand which he slightly touched *obviously* trembled. His demeanor towards Evelyn was unusually distant and reserved, although to us he was all frankness and suavity. Once only I saw him glance at the bouquet which was suspended by the chain from Evelyn's finger. Her eyes rested upon the flowers at the same moment,

and as she raised them their glances met—again Evelyn blushed deeply, and Colonel Damoreau smiled, that winning, thrilling smile, so dangerous and so peculiarly his own. The bouquet then was his gift; I now felt no doubt that I had divined aright.

The Colonel made but a short stay. From the moment of his entrance Evelyn's wonted gaiety returned, and after partaking of a late and hasty dinner we spent the rest of the evening in rather boisterous merriment.

* * * * *

January 4th.

Mrs. Willard has just communicated a piece of information which surprised me much. In a few months our lovely Evelyn will become a mother. Little calculated as she is to ensure by her maternal care and guardianship the future happiness of her child, still I rejoice at the prospect of her maternity. That infant will be a lasting bond of union between her and her husband, and such a bond, I fear, has never yet existed. There is not that community of spirit, that perfect confidence established between them, without which a wife is not spiritually wedded. Since her acquaintance with Colonel Damoreau, Evelyn has been gradually awakening to the consciousness that she did not really love Walter. And it is essential to her existence that she should love. She now feels the *besoin d'aimer*, and her heart must be filled.

Would that she had never seen Colonel Damoreau! His strong impulsive will exerts a most powerful influence over her unregulated mind. Of late she often shuns him with tremulous eagerness, as though she saw her own impending danger. And yet one moment she avoids, the next she is insensible and irresistibly drawn towards him. She is like one walking on the very brink of a precipice, and unless she looks upwards for support, reason will forsake her and she must plunge headlong into the abyss from which there is no return.

I have told you that her temperament was highly nervous, and she seems at times to experience a warning

presentiment which makes her dread the fascination of Colonel Damoreau, and instinctively fly from him. But there are feelings in her breast which cry out louder than the gentle voice of conscience, and she flies — to return again! She may suffer much in struggling with her own growing passion, yet in the end she must be victorious. Then she is about to become a mother, and the whole, intense, and long unengrossed love of her soul will concentrate upon her child. This is my hope, the hope in which I trust and rejoice.

CHAPTER XIII.

“She hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity.”

Henry IV.

From the Same to the Same.

January 10th.

“*Faire des heureux* is one of the highest privileges of our nature,” says Hannah More; and who could look upon Ellen’s altered, animated face, and not feel the full force and truth of the remark? Ellen seems to live a new life, for she has now an object for which to live. She feels that she is daily contributing to the prosperity of some of her fellow-beings; and this happy thought stimulates her to exertion. Then she is constantly employed, and occupation, combined with use, of itself ensures mental cheerfulness.

Little Netta pays her daily visit to the kitchen, and Ellen herself stores the child’s capacious basket with the cold victuals which are carefully reserved for her. I have reason to believe that this poor family are almost entirely supported by the “crumbs which fall from the

rich man's table." Mrs. Willard at Ellen's earnest entreaty has quieted old Betty, who in spite of her asperity possesses a kind heart of her own, and who inspired by the example of her superiors, begins to take compassion upon the desolate looking child.

The day after our visit to Netta's mother, I found Ellen busily looking over her wardrobe and selecting out all the old dresses, flannel, &c., &c., which she should no longer wear, to convert into garments for the child. When Netta came we measured her, and Ellen, with my assistance, cut out several little slips and aprons, with a complete new suit of underclothes. Ellen decided that the child should wear nothing but slips, confined at the waist with a casing, that could be drawn or loosened at pleasure. In this determination she was partly influenced by her own want of skill in mantuamaking, and partly by my suggestion that a loose garment would promote the growth of the child, whose form is remarkably undeveloped for her age.

We passed the evening in Ellen's chamber, plying our needles with great industry. Evelyn paid us a flying visit, and sat down a few moments with the intention of assisting our labors, but she is so restless that she cannot long apply herself to any one occupation. After asking a few questions, and taking a few stitches, she ran away for her purse. On her return she took out a gold piece and said, "There, Ellen, you must take that for the poor little creature: I know you would like to give it to her yourself, so there it is!"

Ellen's eyes glistened as she took the money, but Evelyn, before her sister could thank her, had darted out of the room.

"You must do no such thing, Ellen," said I, "you can spend that money to much better advantage upon the child, or upon her parents, and make it *go much further*, as we Yankees say, than could these ignorant people."

Since Ellen had so injudiciously parted with all the money that she possessed, I had made up my mind to furnish her with a small sum for the benefit of the poor

family. But as my limited means are entirely consumed by my own expenses, and in providing for the necessities of one or two dependants of long standing, (whose histories you know,) I was doubly gratified at Evelyn's generosity.

I promised to return the next morning to assist Ellen in completing at least one suit of her little *protégée's* wardrobe. I kept my word, and we spent the day very pleasantly. Evelyn took an enthusiastic but evanescent sort of interest in our employment. Finding that we would not accept of the services of her needle, (which, by the by, she is not particularly skilful in using,) she tied on her hat and left the house in great haste.

In less than an hour she returned and threw into my lap half a dozen pair of fine, white, small-sized stockings, saying: "There are *pedal coverings* for your little unfortunates *naked extremities*, and I have ordered Middleton to send home four or five sizes of children's shoes, for I could only guess at the dimensions of her feet."

I examined the stockings, and gravely rolling them up again placed them in the astonished Evelyn's hand. She looked at me with comic dismay, while I coolly requested her if she desired to be really charitable to return them to the store, and take in exchange as many pair of coarse grey stockings, which would be of some real service. I added that at the same time she could let Middleton know that he must send double-soled *boots*, made of the stoutest leather, instead of the *shoes* which she had ordered.

Evelyn laughed, and very quizzically elongated her merry face, but made no other reply. Seizing the rejected stockings, she disappeared. When we saw her again, she danced into the room, waving a string of grey stockings, all unrolled, over her head. As she came up to me she dropped them at my feet, and triumphantly held out her hands. The tips of her fingers were inserted into a pair of small woollen mits.

We assured her that the mits would be a most acceptable present for the child; and Evelyn embraced us both as gratefully as though we had given her the plea-

sure which her spontaneous kindness had procured for herself.

We had scarcely finished dinner when Netta arrived with her empty basket in her hand. She looked blue, and shivered with the cold. While she was warming herself in the comfortable kitchen, Ellen was trying to bribe the chambermaid to take the child into her room, and prepare her, by a thorough ablution, to grace her new attire. The chambermaid happens to be an American girl, and is consequently many degrees above her station—for you know that few American women enter into service. She at first declared that she would not touch the little dirty beggar-brat with a tongs; but was finally coaxed into a more obliging mood. At Ellen's entreaty she took the child by the tips of the fingers, rather than by the hand, and preceded by a tub of warm water they retired to the chambermaid's room.

In about three quarters of an hour, Ellen and I joined them. The toilette of the child was just completed. In her little dark plaid dress, her neat blue check apron, her clean grey stockings, and stout new boots, we hardly recognised the ragged little pauper who had left the kitchen so shortly before. Netta looked down at her dress, at her apron, and shoes, and then up into our faces and smiled. But the smile was still that painful smile, mingled with a frown, which must have grown habitual to her.

Even the saucy chambermaid seemed pleased and proud of the metamorphosis which she had effected. The child's hair, though now disentangled, hung in wet straggling strings down her cheek; and our *femme de chambre* suggested to Ellen the propriety of dispensing with its presence. I drew a scissors from my pocket, and Ellen herself cropped the long locks in a very skilful manner. The child's hair was then carefully combed, and a band tied around her head for the sake of neatness. We tied on the little brown silk hood in which I had just placed the finishing stitches, drew the red woollen mits on her hands, wrapped her in a warm dark merino cloak, made out of Ellen's last winter's coat,

placed her well-filled basket on her arm—and away the astonished little creature trudged, to gladden her mother's heart, and excite the wonder and admiration of her young brothers.

We all watched her from the parlour window as she left the house; and I fancied that I could hear Ellen's heart beat with every heaving of her bosom, so great was her agitation, so true her delight.

The child returns daily at the appointed hour. Ellen has provided her with several suits of clothes, but so strong is the force of habit that it is almost impossible to make her comprehend the meaning of the words *clean* and *neat*. The instant she enters the house her hands and face are washed and her apron changed; yet she never makes her appearance when there is no necessity for this precaution. Ellen devotes an hour every afternoon to giving her instruction, for she has never even learnt her alphabet. As yet she evinces a strong distaste for all *literary* occupation, and is dull and inattentive. But Ellen is ever mild and patient—and what may not patience and perseverance accomplish?

We have paid a second visit to the child's mother, and Ellen privately carried her a paper of cocoa-shells, which I accidentally heard that the whole family greatly relished. We also took the baby a little red flannel gown, in which its withered and half-naked little limbs were quickly enveloped.

The mother, on beholding us, evinced her gratitude by tears. The father tried to speak, but emotion choked his utterance, and he sat still with his sightless eyes turned towards us, evidently listening to every word we spoke. Even the old grandmother, supporting herself with difficulty by her bony arms, begged Ellen to come nearer to her; and amidst complaints and groans, told her that it "gladdened her soul to see that we were none of the preachers who always come with empty hands."

Ellen, who had remained so silent during her former visit, now conversed with perfect ease, and promised Nancy to endeavour to obtain her some washing or other work. She even took the baby in her arms, but quickly

gave it back to the mother again, for it felt like a skeleton, and its little limbs hung as loosely in their sockets as though they were scarcely knit to the fragile body.

The child is in all probability dying—wasting away for want of strengthening nourishment and proper care. I had heard that chicken broth was particularly beneficial to infants in that state, and casually communicated the information to Ellen. The next morning I found her in the kitchen with Miss Leslie's cookery book in one hand and a large spoon in the other. She was tasting something in a skillet over the fire. The fat cook and saucy chambermaid were both looking on, the one scolding, and the other laughing: but Ellen did not heed them.

"What are you doing there?" questioned I, "Evelyn told me I would find you in the kitchen."

"Making chicken broth for that poor little creature," replied Ellen gaily. "See how nicely I have succeeded; and I find that one chicken divided in equal parts will make broth enough for three days. Netta is to come at one o'clock every day, and I am to supply her. All the arrows that I paint on the Valentines must henceforth shoot me chickens!"

Ellen has not yet omitted to prepare her bowl of broth for a single day, and we have heard that the infant is improving.

* * * * *

January 10th.

Ellen is already engaged in the translation of her French work. She has chosen the production of an authoress who has greater merit than celebrity. Her style is graceful, spirited, and *springy*—if I may coin a word for the occasion. The tale is full of thrilling incidents, and calculated for the improvement of youth as well as their entertainment. And Ellen has so completely become a *utilitarian* that this is the only kind of work in which she could have interested herself.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ Who can view the ripened rose, nor seek
To wear it ?”

BYRON.

From Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

January 20th.

I'M a lucky fellow, dear Fred, take my word for it, a confoundedly lucky fellow. I do not mean to say that I can exactly echo Cæsar's boast of “Veni vidi vici!” but I have reason to believe myself in a fair way of winning the citadel. And an exciting, even though protracted siege, is better than all Cæsar's storming. I frankly confess, that with the poet I can see

“ No charm in trophies won with ease.”

I hold myself to be a mental epicure, as well as a philosopher, and delight in watching the workings and transitions of the heart around which I am weaving my impalpable web.

What think you, old chum? When you have succeeded in awakening a marked evidence of feeling in the woman you love—when she starts at your step, or blushes at your voice, or betrays the slightest degree of emotion when your warm breath *accidentally* sweeps across her cheek as you murmur in her ear, is not that woman in peril? Is not the victory half won?

Evelyn's eye turns away as it encounters my ardent gaze. Her cheek pales and crimsons when I address her; her hand trembles when I clasp it, however lightly; will you then pretend to deny that she loves me? I know that my image visits her dreams; I know that her waking thoughts are engrossed by me; I know that she tremulously awaits my coming, and that her heart sinks

when I make her expect me in vain. In spite of these promising symptoms, she has shunned me of late, though not pertinaciously. But what of this, when her agitation in my presence is often so overpowering as to become visible to others! She has too much innate and inherent frankness to be an adept in concealing her feelings, and she is too impetuous to be skilful in controlling them.

Fred, I repeat it, I am a lucky fellow. You would cry out "Amen to that," if you could see that matchless creature's eloquent eyes, as they glisten through humid lustre, and veil themselves with their darkly fringed curtains when I venture to whisper "Evelyn" in her ear. Her countenance is a resplendent mirror, and not a thought flits through her brain which I find not reflected in her face. Lovers generally *idealize* their mistress, but I content myself with *analyzing* the charms of mine. To strive to heighten those of Evelyn would indeed be to "paint the lily."

Those tableaux, Fred,—I knew that those tableaux would represent more than the spectators suspected. I confess it, my heart thrilled like that of a youth of twenty as I beheld Gulnare at my feet, with her expressive and impassioned face turned lovingly and beseechingly to mine. That night I waltzed with her, she grew dizzy and sank in my arms. But, while I supported her lovely head, whose face should I behold scowling above it? Whose, but that of her anxious lord! He did not speak, but there was a tempest concentrated in his look. I told you before that he had too thorough a respect for "the proprieties" to make a fool of himself. Were it not for this conventional curb, I might find him a troublesome friend; as it is, I have nothing to fear.

On the first day of the year I sent her a New-Year's token. She knew that the gift was mine, for she had told me that she intended to usher in the year, as Nature had done, in a snowy garment—and my bouquet was entirely composed of white flowers. She has made no allusion to the offering, but an accidental glance revealed to me all that I cared to know.

In your last letter you ask the following ridiculous and somewhat unanswerable question, "What is the secret of your success with the fair? If it is purchasable, I would obtain it any price."

My secret, as you call it, happens neither to be of a purchasable nor explainable nature. I can only say that I never voluntarily enter the presence of a lady with my mind *en deshabille*. It is related of the Duke of Buckingham, that when visiting the Spanish court he wore a profusion of diamonds so loosely attached to his court robe, that, passing through a crowd of ladies, he could strew the jewels, as though accidentally, at their feet. Now, I think it the bounden duty of every man whose pursuit in life is pleasure, and whose aim or desire to succeed in the *beau monde*, to learn a lesson from the gallant Duke, and store his mind with diamonds which he can scatter as lavishly about him. It is not difficult to dazzle the feminine vision—and a fool can take captive the blind.

While we are upon this subject, I may as well mention that I never permit myself to forget *les petites soins*, which are always acceptable to women of all ages and classes—that I never pique one woman by an evident preference for another, nor wound her by a more constant remembrance of *myself* than of *herself*. I could lay down a catalogue of rules, but the time is wanting—and then you have not deserved so much complaisance at my hands, for you have never responded to my wishes in reference to Claudine. Poor little simpleton! I trust she has not broken her heart at my desertion. I have heard nothing from her, and feel certain that she has not traced me. I have no appetite for a *rencontre* with the little fury; and on parting did most devoutly desire that we might "be better strangers."

My friend Richard is still alive, and in a prosperous state. I am compelled to supply him with pocket-money, and to provide him with occupation, to escape being bored to death. He fancies himself my "man of business," because I send him on little excursions to make very useless enquiries about my property, or to

carry letters, which he imagines to be confidential. He is perfectly devoted to me, and so simple-hearted that he never suspects that all actions have their motives.

I called at his lodgings yesterday, to despatch him upon some new errand of imaginary importance, and where do you suppose I found him? He was lying in bed at midday, to save fuel and keep himself warm. He assured me that he was well employed—that he was “keeping up a devil of a thinking,” and that he was “more of a thinking character than I suspected.”

I was afraid that he would interfere with some of my plans, and accordingly sent him that very afternoon to Philadelphia.

Congratulate me, my dear Fred; for, once more, I begin to find existence tolerable. The excitement of my present pursuit has varied life's wearisome monotony. My health is as excellent as ever, my taste as fine, my appetite even better—and I have not been *ennuyé* for a month or upwards. And this miracle has been wrought by the influence of woman—sweet woman! But, mark me, Fred, a man can't expect to find such a paragon as Evelyn Merritt at every step. Why, if she were single, I sometimes think she might almost make a Benedict of me. For who knows into what follies a lover may plunge? I should think it, however, more prudent to run into a strait-jacket than to rush into the bonds of matrimony—I should be sure to find the one quite as irksome as the other.

Fare thee well; let me hear in your next that your face is turned towards Charleston. Credit me, the journey is worth taking: “*le jeu vaut la chandelle.*” I look back upon the days I spent there, forgetting all but their delight. Nothing can be more unwise and absurd than the remembrance of anything which is disagreeable. As for me, I always had, and always shall have,

“Small memory for aught but pleasure.”

Farewell; and take the advice of an experienced soldier, whose military tactics are not confined to the field of battle.

Yours, &c.

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

CHAPTER XV.

"Though dead
The green leaves and decayed the stem, yet still
The spirit of fragrance lingers, loath to leave
Its dear abode; just so love haunts the heart."

L. E. LONDON.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

April 17th.

Two months have glided away since I last wrote, tracking their path with some few changes; but only enough to remind me that we journey onward towards the eternal goal. Dearest Elizabeth, I have passed through a new conflict since I last unveiled my heart to you; but the sunbeam has broken through the cloud, and shows me the path which I should follow.

You are aware that circumstances have thrown me in daily contact with one to whom I was once not wholly indifferent. But it is what he was, or seemed to be, that I loved—not what he now is and seems to be. I loved not the *man* merely, but his *virtues*. When those virtues have vanished, should their empty casket be dear? Alas! memory still lives, and I own that my heart is still engrossed by the image of the past. But I will not follow the dictates of a passion which has not esteem for its basis, lest the airy fabric crumble to the ground, and crush me.

I have once more become the object of those devoted attentions which fifteen years ago made my heart thrill with ecstasy. And does it thrill now? No: disappointment and suspicion have stilled its once rapturous pulsations; the past rises before me, and I dare not trust the present.

True, I cannot now doubt Mr. Elton's sincerity, for youth and its charms have fled from me,—Time

“Hath written strange defeatures on my face,”

and I have neither wealth, nor aught else that can allure. Yes—sincere he is—but *he is not* what my hopes pictured when I first plighted my hand; and I will not wed the man who cannot win my mind's approval. Every rebellious feeling shall be subdued—I will still live as I have lived, forgetful of self, and only existing through others.

Are you not anxious to hear something more of Ellen and her *protégées*? Have you an inclination to take a peep at them? The wish is readily granted. Imagine yourself in a clean airy room, on the first floor, in a much healthier part of the city than the one to which I introduced you formerly. The same wash-tub, upon the same rough planks supported by the old kegs, stands before the window. Nancy, with her decent dress pinned up about her waist, has her bare arms immersed to the very elbows in soapsuds. But the articles which she is diligently washing do not resemble the rags which once filled her tub. Ellen's exertions and my own have procured her regular employment; and when she takes home her clothes every Saturday night, she is sure of a small sum which will at least pay her rent, and perhaps furnish a few necessaries.

But look a little further—the old grandmother is sitting up in a rather rickety arm-chair, that once stood in Ellen's bed-chamber. The aged woman wears a pair of new spectacles over her eyes, and her hands hold four knitting needles. She is trying to knit a stocking; but the task is evidently an unusual one, for she is obliged to examine every stitch.

About the neatly sanded floor creeps an infant in quest of some colored marbles which are rolling around him. The child is clad in a warm dress, and though it is still pale, feeble, and sickly, it bears but little resemblance to the pining little skeleton which I introduced to your acquaintance scarcely more than two months ago.

Beside a very small cooking-stove, (called by the inventor, *the poor man's stove*,) sits the father. His ragged pantaloons have been darned and patched with pieces of various hues, until they bear a similarity to Joseph's many-colored coat. But though his countenance is ruddy, its expression is depressed, and his eyes are still dull, and fixed on vacancy.

And Netta, where is she? Direct your eyes to that window, adorned with a roll of green paper in imitation of fashionable transparencies. Netta is sitting upon the sill, for the sunlight is fast declining, and she can hardly see the stitches which she is taking in her new apron. If you do not recognize her, I shall not wonder,—her bright-colored hair is combed so smoothly over her pale face. Her eyes look less sunken, and the dark ring about them is gradually disappearing. Her cheeks are not much fuller, but her form gives promise of a speedy expansion. Then her little red, striped dress, and her check apron are so tidily arranged, that you might suppose she momentarily expected a visit from her kind friend Miss Ellen.

And look—there comes Billy, as hungry as a lion, and prepared to relish the bowl of bread and milk which his mother is handing to him. He devours his supper in haste, for his books are not yet all sold; but he finds time between every few mouthfulls to pause and recount the exploits of "Mark the Smasher."

I cannot say that Billy's appearance is much improved. He retains an unconquerable aversion to soap and water, and the scuffles that daily and *professionally* engage a portion of his time, give his clothes some slight resemblance to those of the murdered Cæsar. Billy is a capital boxer, but he now and then meets his match amongst the *News-boys*, and not unfrequently falls into the retributive hands of the "Smashers." It is consequently difficult to get a glimpse of his countenance, when his nose is not swollen to twice its natural dimensions, nor his forehead scarred, nor one eye curtailed of its original proportions, closed, and blackened. Billy still retains his contempt for the lady who never heard of "*Mark the*

Smasher," and seldom deigns to honor her with a word. But towards Ellen, who did not so openly "betray her ignorance, he evinces a sort of rude respect.

These are changes, but they are not the only ones which the last two months have effected. Give a glance at Ellen's face, and henceforth confess that all real beauty consists in expression. Has not her countenance grown positively lovely? Is not her very look attractive? And her manners—could you imagine a demeanor more modest, yet engaging?

For six weeks after Ellen first commenced her French translation, morning and evening found her pen in hand. For her further convenience, I made her a present of my own little secretary, and that is perhaps one reason why I have written to you so seldom. When not writing, she was either taking exercise or plying her needle; and really, she has become an apt sempstress. Her health has visibly improved, and she seems to be too much engrossed to think of her own sufferings—truly a most enviable unconsciousness—a specific for many an ailment.

At the end of six weeks, Ellen's translation was completed and corrected, and copied off in a bold, legible hand. She then timidly offered the manuscript for my inspection. I spent a couple of days in reading it with her, and making such corrections in the style, punctuation, &c., as I thought advisable. Every once and awhile, when I struck my pen through a line and altered a phrase, or substituted another one, she would heave a sigh and look half-discouraged. But I comforted her with some stories about Virgil and Pope, and the interlining and erasures which defaced their manuscripts; and she laughed at the comparison, and was content.

At last the translation was considered in a state to place in the printer's hands. We spent an hour or two in composing a suitable and "taking" note to one of the principal publishers in this city, requesting an answer without delay.

A week passed on and no answer came. Ellen's heart began to fail. I suggested that Billy might be despatched

with a second note and ordered to wait for an answer. My advice was followed. Billy faithfully fulfilled the commission, and on his return placed a large roll of paper in Ellen's hand. Ellen turned pale and the paper dropping from her grasp, fell to the ground, burst open, and disclosed the rejected manuscript accompanied by a coarse piece of foolscap folded in the shape of a note! I opened this ominous slip of paper and learnt that the publishers, to whom Ellen had applied, did not print the productions of unknown authors, and that no remuneration could be expected for similar works.

After the first burst of feeling. Ellen bore her disappointment heroically, and turning to me with a hopeful smile, said, "There are more publishing houses than one in the city!"

It chanced that Mr. Elton entered the parlor at Fleecer's just as Ellen withdrew. Her manuscript was still in my hand, and before I reflected upon the imprudence of the question, I asked if he was acquainted with any publishers in the city. He glanced at the manuscript and replied, "Yes, with several: can I serve you in any manner?"

I could not lose this opportunity of disposing of Ellen's production. I frankly explained to Mr. Elton our dilemma, requesting that he would keep my communication secret. He promised to do so, and offered to take charge of the manuscript, and present it himself to a publisher with whom he was intimately acquainted. That same evening, just as I was about to retire, he sent me word that if I would return to the parlor it would gratify him exceedingly, as he had something to communicate. I hurried down, and he presented me with fifteen dollars, saying that Ellen's manuscript would shortly be published, and that he had no doubt a second translation of the same length would find as ready a sale!

Think of my delight, or rather think of Ellen's, when the next morning I placed the money in her hand! She had never in her life possessed so large a sum, and this was doubly esteemed because it was her own earnings. She soon devised fifteen hundred different ways of dis-

posing of the fifteen dollars, and in a few moments had settled in that manner every shilling should be expended. Her remarks were concluded with the assurance that she would pay a visit to the largest depôt of foreign books before she slept, and that a second translation should be commenced without delay.

I cannot close this letter without one word concerning the fair Evelyn. She has been indisposed lately, and unable to leave the house. She sees but little company and her spirits are frequently depressed. Sometimes she suddenly bursts forth in an enthusiastic strain about the unborn infant which she longs to behold; and then she will as suddenly exclaim, in mournful accents, "Oh! I wish it may never see the light, or seeing it, know nothing but happiness!"

Mr. Merritt is more tender, more considerate, and more devoted than ever, and humors her most unreasonable caprices. Colonel Damoreau is still a constant visitor, but Evelyn frequently refuses to see him, and when he is admitted, she appears abstracted, melancholy, and restless. The hour of her trial and her happiness is approaching. Heaven grant that she may clasp a living child to her maternal bosom.

CHAPTER XVI.

"To mark my own heart's restless beat,
Rock it to its untroubled rest,
And watch the growing soul beneath
Dawn in faint smiles; and hear its breath,
Half interrupted by calm sighs."

SHELLEY.

From the Same to the Same.

May 1st.

UPON a May day morn as sunny and cloudless as this one year ago, we decked Evelyn for her bridal. Her

image rises before me now as she stood in front of her mirror, buoyant with "the glad sense of being," radiant with hope and happiness. Her bright eyes outflashing the diamond that encircled her brow, her glowing face resplendent with smiles, and her light symmetrical form floating about to the stirring music of her own gladsome voice. But there are painful memories mingled with the brighter recollections of that bridal day. The fearful and despairing expression of her countenance when I awoke her from the half trance into which she had fallen just before we arrayed her in her nuptial robe—the cloud that passed over her features, and the shudder that ran through her frame when she stood before the altar, and the question that sealed her fate was solemnly asked.

But why should I dwell upon these passing shadows? Prognostics I will not believe them to be—henceforth let reason consign them to oblivion!

May morning has come again and laid an added joy upon the young heart of Evelyn—a blessing and a blessed burden!

I had not paid a visit to my friends in Union Place for three days, and this morning found me at the door of their ever hospitable mansion. I met Ellen with her bonnet on in the entry. She almost flew into my arms, exclaiming: "I was just coming to tell you! Evelyn is a mother! Evelyn has a daughter! Walter and mother are almost wild with delight!"

She was so much overcome by her joyful emotions that for a few minutes she was totally unable to answer my anxious enquiries.

Mrs. Willard who had heard my voice, now ran down the stairs; and for once I felt certain that her exhibition of feeling was unfeigned. She pressed my hand without speaking, and a tear gathered in her eye—a tear that did not contradict the smile upon her lip.

At last she said: Dr. R—— has forbidden Evelyn to see anybody, but she will not be satisfied until she has shown her little cherub to you! Oh! Kate, it made me feel as I did twenty years ago when I received Evelyn's

infant in my arms — it seemed as though I had myself become a mother again!"

After a short conversation I was led to Evelyn's chamber. Upon a low couch, supported by snowy pillows, lay the young mother. Never had I beheld her face so pale, yet so calm — so holy in its expression. The delicate veins that interlaced her temples showed through her translucent skin. Her clear blue eyes, clearer than ever, were half veiled by their transparent lids—those eyes were softened by suffering, and by the new and pure emotion which so lately had birth in her soul. Her redundant tresses were confined beneath a cap bordered with narrow lace. Perhaps it was that close cap, and the fine white lace lying upon the temples that gave such a soft and madonna-like expression to her faultless countenance. One arm lay upon her bosom, and upon the other her infant's little head was pillowed. She did not notice me when I entered the room, for her eyes were intently fixed upon the face of the slumbering babe.

I spoke to her gently; she looked up with a bright smile—heaved one sob and burst into tears!

We were fearful that this agitation might injure her, but she quickly grew calm again. I stooped to kiss her brow, and she pointed to the infant and tried to raise it towards me. I understood her action and pressed my lips to its silky cheek, murmuring a blessing as I did so.

"You must not speak, Evelyn;" said Mrs. Willard, warningly; "indeed you must be perfectly quiet."

"Only a few words, dear mother;" replied she. Then raising her eyes to mine, she said gently, "Is it not a little angel, Carissima? Oh! such an overpowering sense of happiness crept over me as they placed it in my arms! Look at its little hands—it has filbert nails, like yours. Is not its head beautiful? Mother do take off its cap and show her its sweet head, and all its glossy black hair!"

The fat old nurse now approached us, and in a consequential tone insisted that the young mother should be kept quiet; at the same time advising me to retire.

To this Evelyn would not consent. She promised not to speak, if I might only be permitted to sit beside her.

I took my seat at the head of the bed and held one of her hands, which ever and anon she tenderly pressed, lifting her eyes for a moment to my face, and then turning them upon her child again.

For some time she lay quiet, but all at once I observed her features working—her eyes were strangely dilated, and her lips pressed against each other, then parted as though she experienced some acute pain. Before I could call the attention of the old nurse, Evelyn, with a sudden effort, drew her child to her bosom, covered its little face with passionate kisses, and cried out, "Oh! God! let it not be miserable! Let it never be like its mother! I know that I shall bring misery upon it—I feel that I shall!" And then she again burst into a violent fit of weeping.

It would not have been easy to pacify her, had not the child been awakened by her too rude embrace, and its little wailing voice recalled her to her senses. She would not permit the nurse to take the babe, but hushed it to rest upon her own bosom.

Though Evelyn's agitation alarmed and grieved me, I still retained my seat by her side. To avow the truth, I began to grow nervous, and to experience one of those presentiments of evil to which I always dread to give way. In a few moments Evelyn looked at me again, and said in an altered and musical voice, "Walter is so happy!"

It was the first time for a long period that I had heard her mention her husband's name with affection, and that one sentence banished my rising fears. Once more I entertained the sweet conviction that that child would save its mother from misery and ruin. It would be a golden bond to link her unalterably to her husband. Her heart would now have an idol, since such hearts as hers must ever have an earthly one; and that idol, though earthly, was indeed a heavenly gift. She was *saved*, and a shield encompassed her heart which all *Colonel Damoreau's* fascinations could never penetrate.

I was afraid of lingering too long, and now took my leave. Evelyn had fallen into a tranquil slumber, and I stole from the apartment without arousing her. Mrs. Willard and Ellen as stealthily followed me.

"Walter's delight knows no bounds," said Mrs. Willard. "He was ashamed to propose it, but I knew that he wanted to hold the little darling himself; so I placed it in his arms. You ought to have seen his face! He blushed like a girl! and when he kissed Evelyn, he could hardly keep from weeping."

"And how is grandpapa?" questioned I, for no mention of Mr. Willard had been made.

"Very happy, of course," replied Mrs. Willard, "but very suffering. He is a victim to the dyspepsia, and can hardly participate in any pleasure. We leave him alone and let him sleep, which he does half the time."

"You do not know how my poor father suffers. Mrs. Katherine," sighed Ellen; "I wish I could do something for him!"

"You must try to rouse and amuse him," replied I.

"It is not easy to amuse my father," returned Ellen.

"Love can accomplish very difficult tasks," was my suggestive answer.

We had reached the street door, which Mrs. Willard opened. I had no time for further conversation, and bade them adieu.

* * * * *

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I have been ill, and accordingly this letter has remained for a fortnight unconcluded. Ellen was continually at my side with her books and her words, and I feel indebted to her care for my rapid recovery. I left the house yesterday for the first time since my indisposition. And whither should I bend my steps but to the happy mansion of the young mother, our beloved Evelyn?

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May 15th.

I have been ill, and accordingly this letter has remained for a fortnight uncompleted. Ellen was continually at my side with her books and her work, and I feel indebted to her care for my rapid recovery. I left the house yesterday for the first time since my indisposition. And whither should I bend my steps but to the happy mansion of the young mother, our beloved Evelyn?

I found her seated in a large, easy chair, with her infant in her arms, and its tender head cradled upon her bosom—for she will scarcely permit that and per-

other couch. Her lovely features have acquired a new, a reflected expression, since they have bent over those of her young angel. Her countenance was full of placid tenderness, and its restless look had entirely vanished. Her voice, too, was never so soft and so low. New beauties momentarily develop themselves with her new feelings. But, alas! how little conscious is she of her mighty responsibilities! How seldom does she remember that a soul is placed in her charge which she must train for heaven! How little does she realize that that soul's future and eternal happiness may depend upon her guidance; like an arrow shot from a bow, upon the bent which it receives from her hands!

And yet her every thought entwines itself about and centres upon that cherished infant. Mrs. Willard told me that sometimes Evelyn would sit for hours with the babe pressed to her heart, gazing upon its little face, and unconscious of anybody's presence, singing to it in a low, murmuring voice, words that burst spontaneously from her lips, and sprang as involuntarily from her heart. She even fancies that it already recognizes her, and smiles in her face, and opens its large blue eyes at her kiss alone.

I had had but little time to converse with Evelyn, before Mr. Merritt entered. I rose to congratulate him, and he pressed my hand with delighted warmth. The next minute he was at Evelyn's feet, kneeling beside his little daughter, and kissing her dimpled hands with all the father in his looks. Coldness, conventionalism, and the fear of being ridiculed, were absorbed in paternal pride—the ceremonious man of the world was lost in the father.

My visit was but short, for the old nurse thought it time that Evelyn should return to her couch; and, to my surprise, the now docile young mother made no objection. She was content, so that her infant lay beside her.

When I returned to the parlour, Ellen was reading to her father, with whom she had just taken a long walk. Difficult *Jamoreau* the task of cheering him; but Ellen,

unwearied in her efforts to be of use, and to communicate happiness by her very presence, has undertaken to make even his condition less deplorable. And already are the early fruits of her exertions visible. She has wrought a remarkable change in Mr. Willard—a mental change which affects him physically. He begins to take interest in life. The books which he reads divert his mind; and though he generally falls asleep after listening to the first few pages, he is easily aroused; and a walk in the fresh air, with Ellen prattling by his side, gives new impetus to the sluggish circulation of his blood, and restores his almost suspended animation.

She told me that her sensations were beyond description delightful, when the other day he placed his hand upon her head, and said, "What a blessing you are to me, Ellen; you have quite made me forget my dyspepsia!"

Do not suppose that Ellen's new duties induce her to neglect Netta and her parents. As I entered, I met the little girl upon the porch, with her well-filled basket on her arm, and her primer in her hand. Her thin face is gradually growing rounder, and a healthful glow sometimes tinges her cheeks: but her frame is still fragile and feeble.

* * * * *

May 16th.

"The heart," says Jean Paul, in allusion to a heart that loves purely and warmly, "like the wandering sun, sees nothing from the dew-drop to the ocean but a mirror which it warms and fills." Such a heart, then, must Ellen's be. Her newly awakened love of doing good leaves no source through which it can vent itself unemployed. Let me relate to you a little incident which gave birth to this passing reflection.

Yesterday afternoon I was leisurely strolling through Broadway, our fashionable promenade, when I remarked a figure before me which strongly resembled that of the unfortunate Ellen. I accelerated my pace, and as I drew near quickly recognized her hat and pelerine. I

approached and joined her without her perceiving me, for she was lost in thought. Just as I was about to speak, I noticed that she held a large bunch of flowers, divided with four or five neatly arranged bouquets, in her hands. These flowers were partially concealed by her handkerchief, and it was obviously her desire that they should not be visible. The spirit of curiosity seized me, and I involuntarily drew back and walked behind her.

“But had this sudden curiosity no better foundation?” you will ask. Truly it had: several times I had noticed Ellen dividing the flowers, which are almost daily sent to her sister, into small bouquets. And these bouquets invariably disappeared very mysteriously. Twice I asked Ellen in what manner she disposed of her flowers, (but she replied that to have a secret was one of the privileges of the sex.)

I followed Ellen unnoticed until we reached St Paul’s church. At the corner, imperfectly shaded from the sun by a large and tattered umbrella, sat a very decrepid old woman. Before her stood a small stand, which held two or three bowls of water, containing bunches of the most common garden flowers. With an imploring glance she extended her yellow and bony hand to almost every passer-by; but few heeded her, and fewer stopped to purchase her uninviting nosegays.

Ellen, when she was within a few paces of the old woman, glanced timidly around to see if she was unmarked; and then hastily untying the string that bound the bouquets together, approached the stand, silently dropped them in the woman’s lap, and hurried on.

The old woman gathered up the flowers, looked at them admiringly, smelt them, then gazed after Ellen, and then looked at the flowers again, murmuring some words which must have been either a blessing or a prayer. And well she might bless the kind heart which, having no alms to give, had found so ingenious and equivalent a substitute.

I walked up to the old woman just as she was placing Ellen’s flowers in water, and said: “You have some

beautiful nosegays there—I see that they are green-house flowers, and worth a considerable sum.”

“Sure and they’re worth all the world to me, for its good luck they bring along with them,” croaked out the old woman. “They fall into my lap as though they had dropped from Heaven; and sure it seems as though Heaven sent them, for it’s no less than an angel brings them.”

“Do you know the lady who carried you these flowers?”

“I only know that she is a lady, every inch of her. I never clapped my two eyes upon her before a month ago, and never heard the sound of her honey voice but once, when she asked me how much my flowers cost, and bought a nosegay. And since that day it’s seldom the sun ever sets without her having dropped a bunch or two into my lap, just without ever lipping a word, and away she runs before I can tell her how thankful I am, and how much money her flowers make me.”

The old woman now offered me one of Ellen’s nosegays, but I preferred to purchase one of her own; for it was possible that I might encounter Ellen returning home, and I would not rob her of the pleasure of doing good in secret.

We did not meet, however, and Ellen is not yet aware that her old flower-woman and I are acquainted.

CHAPTER XVII.

“’Tis right, ’tis just to feel contempt for vice,
But he that shows it may be over-nice.”

CRABBE.

From the Same to the Same.

May 19th.

“OH! Miss Katerine! Miss Katerine!” exclaimed Ellen, bursting into my room this afternoon without even delaying her progress by a knock. “Oh! Miss Katerine, you do not know what has happened! I am so heart-sick—so miserable!”

My first thought was of Evelyn and her infant, and I could hardly command my voice to inquire if any accident had befallen either of them.

“They are well, quite well;” replied Ellen. “But poor little Netta, and her parents—they have turned out so badly! All my exertions for them have been worse than useless, and I am now quite discouraged!”

“Pray tell me what has happened?”

“Why, yesterday I met Billy returning home just towards dark, empty-handed, and dreadfully bruised, as though he had been severely whipped. Indeed he was in so much pain that he could hardly walk; and the nice little check blouze which I made him was torn into ribbons. Although he was suffering so much, he was too proud to cry, and braved it out. I insisted upon his telling me what had happened, but could not induce him to speak until I had bribed him with the promise of a shilling. He then informed me that after selling the usual number of books for Mark, he went to the Sun Office to purchase some newspapers. After having bought five or six, as he was waiting for change he laid down his

own papers on the counter just over a pile of others. The change was handed to him, and as the salesman was attending to a crowd of customers he took up his bundle, and with it eight or ten other papers which lay beneath. He had sold nearly all the papers at his own corner, when somebody came behind him and knocked him down, flogged him with a cowskin, emptied his pockets, and left him lying in the street with a crowd of little ragged fellows laughing and jeering at his mishap. He acknowledged that he had been beaten by one of the clerks of the Sun Office.

‘I tried to convince him that the sin he had committed should grieve him much more than the pain he had received. But he had either too little rationality to distinguish right from wrong, or is hardened in vice, for he boldly disagreed with me.

“I did not expect to change his nature by a miracle, but entertained hopes of influencing him at some future period. Those hopes are now almost entirely destroyed.

“So much for Billy—but that is not half. I called to see his mother to-day to carry her another paper of cocoa shells, and some socks which I have just finished knitting for her baby. But Oh! Miss Katerine, if you had only beheld the scene which presented itself to my eyes when I opened their room door! The father was lying stretched out upon the floor, his face flushed and his eyes closed. I at first thought he had been seized with a fit, and bent over him in alarm; but the strong odor of his breath betrayed that his stupefaction arose from brandy. I turned to the mother—she was staggering about the room, perfectly regardless of the baby who was kicking and screaming in Netta’s arms.”

“Can it be possible! Could that modest, decent-looking woman have been intoxicated?” inquired I.

“Too possible, and too true;” returned Ellen. “I spoke to her, and she answered me in the most reckless and insolent manner. All her usual humility and decorum of deportment had vanished. I could hardly restrain my tears, I walked up to the bed where the old grandmother lay, and though her breath also indicated

that the tempting cup had not passed her lips untasted, she still retained her senses.

“ I am afraid I did not choose a fitting moment, but how could I help warning her against the use of ardent spirits, and pointing out the misery which they engendered? She strenuously denied having tasted any liquor, or that any had ever been brought into the room. I pointed to her son on the floor, and asked ‘ how came he in that state?’

“ She answered by again denying that she or any of the family had tasted a mouthful of spirits, and called upon Netta to declare whether or not she spoke the truth.

“ I looked at Netta warningly, to prevent her from speaking an untruth. But she, with an unruffled countenance, looked up and — Oh! it was horrible to hear such young lips utter a falsehood with the coolness and self-possession of callous vice!”

Ellen paused.

“ Go on,” said I.

“ I have done,” she replied; “ that is all. I came away disgusted and disheartened. I have given this woman the ability to earn money, and I have only placed in her hands the means of indulging her vicious propensities. Is it any wonder that I am discouraged?”

“ But you will not forsake them at the very moment when they have most need of your counsel and influence? Remember it is they who are sick that need a physician, not they who are whole.”

“ But what further interest can I take in them?” returned Ellen.

“ There would be but little merit in doing good to those only in whom your heart was interested—to those by whom your fancy was pleased, or your feelings excited. Strive to ameliorate the condition of these unfortunate people, and you will soon find that you take a *true* interest in their welfare *in consequence* of your exertion to benefit them. Do you not remember that beautiful passage from Kant, where he remarks: ‘ When is said thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, it is

not meant thou shalt love him first, and do good to him in consequence of that love, but thou shalt do good to thy neighbour—and this thy beneficence will engender in thee that love to mankind which is the fulness and the consummation of the inclination to do good.’”

“You are right, always right!” said Ellen. “I will not forsake them nor diminish my exertions for their welfare. But how can we eradicate this dreadful habit of intemperance, which must inevitably ruin them in spite of us?”

“We will hope that it is not a confirmed habit; but even should it be so, we should not despair. The mother we can probably influence by threatening her with the loss of your patronage. You must watch her closely, at the same time strengthening her by your entreaties and counsel. If she errs again, withdraw your protection; and when she finds herself in the same state of destitution in which you first discovered her, she may repent. Then you may make a second trial, and again afford her assistance. As for the father, you must induce him to sign the temperance pledge. He is forced to be idle, and without this restraint the inclination to temporarily banish trouble by intoxication may be too strong for resistance.”

Ellen left me—grateful for my advice, and prepared not merely to follow it, but to improve upon my suggestions.

* * * * *

May 21st.

Long, very long, have I endeavoured to conceal from myself, as from you, that the conflicting emotions daily struggling in my heart are undermining my health. The days of my youth are ever rising before me. Pity and latent affection are ever warring with principle and reason. The reproachful and supplicating eyes that morning and night encounter mine, haunt my unquiet slumbers. Alas! how difficult is it to forget ourselves—our own past happiness and present sorrows! With the lip we may seem to remember others only, but in the heart we are too sure to find *ourselves* enshrined as our own

idol. Could we but wholly displace this false god, then indeed and then only could we taste of truly angelic felicity.

I am feeble and ill, and daily growing worse. There is neither hope nor help for me but in flight, and fly I must, and that quickly.

My sweet friend, Amy Ellwell, whom I trust you have not forgotten, has been recommended by her physician to try the sulphur springs, in Virginia, for the benefit of her health. It has long been feared that she is consumptive. Well may her parents be alarmed for her safety—she is their only child, and the sole heiress of her father's hardy-earned wealth. They intend accompanying her to the springs, and in the fall they are to take a tour through the Southern States.

A few days since Amy, remarking my obvious debility, asked me how I would like to join their party and travel with them. I at first conceived the project to be impracticable, for my income is too limited to procure me such an indulgence. But my health continuing rapidly to fail, I have now concluded to encroach upon the capital and accept Amy's proposal. I may be obliged to deprive myself of many comforts, and perhaps some necessaries, on my return. But what are the comforts money can purchase, if it cannot procure the inestimable blessing of health?

Amy was overjoyed at my determination, and Mr. and Mrs. Ellwell were kind enough to express themselves delighted at the prospect of my company. They leave in a week, but I have few preparations to make, and should be ready, bag and baggage, in less time.

Most sincerely do I regret my separation from Evelyn, and hardly less deeply from Ellen. Who shall say what changes may overshadow or brighten their existence before we meet again? But throughout my life I have had cause to thank Heaven for this one blessing—that the future was hidden from our view.

* * * * *

May 28th.

We start to-morrow. Seven o'clock will find us on

board of the steamboat for Philadelphia. This evening I bade Evelyn a tearful adieu. She placed her baby in my arms, and besought me to remember it and her.

What a misfortune it is that Evelyn is so constitutionally nervous! Forebodings of coming evil—evil that indeed “casts its shadows before,” oppress her in the midst of her purest joys. As she imprinted fervent kisses upon my lips and forehead, she shuddered and wept, and once or twice sobbed out, “Shall I be as happy when I see you again! I shall not! I feel that I shall not! I may never be so happy again as I am now!”

I call these presentiments or premonitions *unfortunate*; but they would be otherwise did they teach us to guard against impending evil. But, few heed the warning which many hear.

Mrs. Willard, in bidding me farewell, presented me with a couple of coquettishly demure caps, which she had just been inventing for herself. I have no doubt that in offering them she felt they were the most valuable gift of which she could beg my acceptance; for that which enhances personal charms must ever in her eyes be unsurpassed in value.

She took me aside, after I had accepted the caps, and said in a very kind and sympathizing voice, “It is really almost time for you to begin to wear caps. They would become you. You are going amongst strangers, and must consult appearances. I see one or two silver hairs impertinently mingling themselves with your brown ones. I have heard of a very safe and excellent dye—if you would like to make use of it, I will give you the receipt.”

I thanked her, but politely declined making any attempt to repair my charms for the present. I was convinced by her manner that this unexpected refusal spared me from no little advice on the subject of youthful looks. Mrs. Willard, in the enthusiasm of the moment, was about to commit a great imprudence. In a few minutes more, all the secrets of her toilet would have been confided to me. This confidence would not have strength-

ened our friendship. She would soon have repented her own rash haste—then mistrusted, and then perhaps hated me because she had voluntarily unveiled herself to my eyes.

Mr. Merritt next bade me adieu, and said, "In losing you we lose a true friend, whose place no substitute can fill."

Mr. Willard and Ellen accompanied me home—for Ellen wished to delay the moment of our parting; besides which, she thought that the walk would benefit her father. Mr. Willard is hardly less taciturn than formerly, but he now at least listens, though he does not speak—and a good listener, you know, is sometimes preferable to a great talker.

Ellen conversed without restraint in his presence, and told me of Netta's improvement—of Nancy's repentance, and of Dan's obstinate refusal to sign the temperance pledge.

"You must write, and tell me all about them," said I.

"Write! to be sure I will!" replied Ellen animatedly. "That will be one of my greatest consolations. But how busy I shall be! You know that I have commenced the translation of my second French tale; then I am reading Dickens' works to papa—and I have considerable sewing for Netta to accomplish—why I shall not have a minute for myself!"

"Nor half a minute for the *blue devils*!" replied I.

"Ah! if they ever attack me again!" answered Ellen. "I have a panacea. You have placed in my hand a talisman with which I may defy them!"

We had reached Fleocer's, and Ellen threw her arms around my neck as she tenderly kissed me for adieu. At the same time she told me that she and her father would rise with the sun, to meet me at the steamboat to-morrow morning.

When I entered the parlor at Fleocer's, although it was quite late, Mr. Elton was reclining upon the sofa, evidently awaiting my return.

He rose and begged me to be seated, but I declined, for I dreaded a lengthened interview.

"I must bid you good-bye," said I, in a tone of assumed sprightliness; "I start to-morrow morning."

"Must you go? *Must* you indeed go?" inquired he, seizing my hand. I had scarcely strength or courage to withdraw it, for his was hot and tremulous.

"The Fates have decreed it!" replied I, with forced gaiety. "I look forward to a delightful jaunt, and I trust that I shall return in such robust and unladylike health that your gentility will hardly permit you to recognize me."

"You are happy that you can jest," said he with a sorrowful look.

"But unhappy that I monopolize all the mirth," returned I.

"When you depart you carry mine with you," was his serious answer.

I might have retorted, "and leave much of my own behind;" but my lips were not at that moment in communication with my heart, and they spoke differently.

"Good night, and good-bye," said I suddenly, for I felt that I could not much longer command myself.

"Good-bye!" replied Mr. Elton, laconically. But I saw that he could say no more.

We shook hands—both tried to smile, and both failed—we bowed, and I withdrew. Ah! had we known no severer parting, this might have seemed painful—but our joys and sorrows are only great or trivial by comparison, and my present grief lost its poignancy when compared to one greater affliction.

And now that I have said adieu to all, I must whisper it to you also, my cherished friend; I shall continue to write to you at intervals, but my letters may not be frequent. Farewell! Good spirits attend you!

CHAPTER XVIII

"That a young maid's wife
Should be as mortal as an old man's life!"

"Better I were distract
So would my thoughts be severed from my guilt,
And woe by strong indignation loss
The memory of themselves."

From the Same to the Same

Charleston, October 1st.

YOUR letter, your kind, your
before me. I have re-read
pression of friendship is gar
must write to you, you say,
you of the principal joys of y
me. That is a
goose-quill,
ruffle the quiet
less as that of

You will be
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southern sta
a letter which
to complete some
We shall probably
weeks.

love-inspired letter, lies
y line, and every ex-
up in my heart. I
silence has deprived
calm existence, you tell
I will resume my
one pleasant breeze to
its toil shall be as end-

of this letter, that we
sed the summer very
We shall, however,
cted tour through the
y days since, received
return to New York,
business arrangements.
ve Charleston in a couple of

Amy's health is almost entirely r
constitutionally feeble, and a breath
cately fine organization of her system.
being is this Amy Ellwell! She has

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the deli-
loveable
ne might

call an *agreeable presence*. There is a quiet goodness about her—a depth in her very stillness—a nobleness and purity of purpose which pervades every act of her life. Her goodness appears to be innate and hereditary, and she has few or no evil passions against which she is forced to struggle. Yet faultless in her character, and endearing in her manners as she is, I cannot entertain for her the ardent love which I bear Evelyn and Ellen. It would seem as though their very failings made them dear. I can only account for this strange fact, by supposing that my imperfect nature permits me to have more sympathy with those who err.

Evelyn no longer writes to me, although I receive a letter from Ellen every few weeks. They are both well, and, as far as I can ascertain, happy.

Amy and I met with a singular adventure yesterday, which though it cannot amuse must interest you. At an early hour in the morning, we left our hotel to take a promenade, and acquaint ourselves with the city. We had walked some distance, and were near the outskirts of the town, when we encountered a troop of men and boys, many of them colored, laughing and shouting as they advanced towards us.

We could not at first perceive the object of their merriment; but as they drew nearer we beheld in the midst of them, a young girl who was wildly tossing about her arms, and shaking her clenched fists, first at one, then at another of the crowd.

In stature she was considerably below the usual height; but her form was most symmetrically proportioned. Her dress was disordered, her dark hair floated about her face and half-bare shoulders, her large eyes stared wildly about; and Amy and I at a single glance concluded that she was deranged.

The instant her eyes rested upon us, she rushed towards Amy, and rudely seized her arm. Amy turned pale, but did not struggle. The girl retained her hold, gazed in Amy's face, and then shrieked out, "You are a woman, and your lot must be suffering—wrong—ruin—woe—despair! You are a woman, and you must be

spurned! hated! forsaken! You are a woman, and you *must*—you *only can* pity!”

Amy remained motionless, but the unfortunate creature no longer grasped her arm. She was standing quietly before her, and earnestly and abstractedly scanning her features.

The crowd appeared awe-struck, for not a murmur was heard. At length the girl heaved a deep sigh, and pressing her hand on her bosom exclaimed in a milder and sorrowful tone, “No, No! The fire that rages here cannot burn in your breast—it cannot scorch you as it consumes me! No—no! You are too calm—too pure—you are not like me!”

She turned from us and darted away. The crowd by which she had been before pursued, instantly followed her.

I observed an old man, who was more deliberately taking the same road as the others, and walking up to him inquired, “Can you tell me who she is, and where she lives?”

“Well, I don’t exactly know;” was his reply. “I believe her father lives in that old house where you see her going in. I reckon she’s crazy, and I shouldn’t wonder if she was no better than she should be.”

Amy and I, both involuntarily, and in silence, took our way to the dilapidated dwelling which the old man had pointed out. The girls had disappeared into the house. Several of the foremost men followed her, but quickly returned again with horror depicted upon their countenances. Amy and I passed through the midst of the crowd, walked uninterruptedly into the house, and opened the first door to which we came.

The room was devoid of furniture, except an empty bedstead; the floor uncarpeted and even unsanded. At the further end of the apartment, two chairs supported a rough wooden coffin. Beside that coffin knelt the young girl!

With noiseless steps, but throbbing hearts, we approached her. The coffin contained the corpse of an old man wrapped in a coarse shroud. The pale cheek

of the girl was pressed against the ghastlier one of the corpse, and her dark tresses mingled with the thin blanched locks that waved about the old man's brow. His glossy, half-open eyes seemed to look sorrowfully into ours. There were tears upon his cold cheek—they were the tears of the hopeless mourner.

The kneeling girl caught his lifeless hand within her own, and stretching her arm towards heaven, murmured in frantic accents, "Speak! speak one word, father, and curse him with me! Speak, and pray God to curse your child's destroyer, and your murderer!"

In her excitement she dropped the lifeless arm, and it fell with a dull, heavy sound back into the coffin. That sound seemed to arouse her. She started up shrieking; "He cannot speak! He does not hear me! He is dead! dead! dead! Quite dead!"

Again she knelt, with her clasped hands, and supplicating eyes raised to heaven. "Father!" she cried, "hear the vow uttered beside thy senseless corpse! I will devote my life to vengeance! I will haunt the fiend who has robbed us both! I will pursue him to the tomb, and beyond—if there be a beyond! He shall be more miserable even than he has rendered us! Oh, God! as thou art merciful—as thou art just—grant me *one* prayer! Make me the instrument of thy sure vengeance!"

Her head sank again upon her father's bosom, and it would have wrung your heart to have heard her sobs.

I ventured to approach and lightly touch her shoulder. She sprang to her feet and shrieked out, "No! no! I tell you that I am not mad—I wish I were—I cannot forget my griefs in madness! I am too wretched to be mad!"

She spoke truly, for her phrenzy was the phrenzy of grief, and her reason was not impaired.

"Of what illness did your father die?" questioned I, at a loss what to say.

"Of a canker in the heart! Of the gnawing serpent's tooth of an ungrateful child! I killed him!"

"Pray be calm," returned I. "We desire to be your friends."

She repeated the word "friends," and laughed scornfully. Then with increased violence said, "I have had a friend before now—a brave friend—I will seek him out that he may be forced to remember his old friendship. Will you be such a friend as he was?"

"If you will permit us, we will be your true friends."

The poor girl looked at us—shook her head mournfully and replied: "You do not know me—you do not know what I am—you pity me—I am unworthy even of your pity!"

"That you cannot be," said Amy, now for the first time addressing her, "you have apparently no home: will you not come with us and share ours?"

"I cannot leave him," replied the girl pointing to the corpse.

"But to-morrow he must be taken from you," said Amy.

At these words the poor mourner grew frantic again. "They shall not!" she cried. "Who shall dare to touch him? They shall break my arms before they unclasp them from about him. I have been parted from him once—I came back to see him die, but I will never leave him again. They shall bury me with him!"

We spent some time in attempting to persuade her to accompany us home. At first she replied in the wild manner which I have already described. Then exhausted by the violence of her emotions, she sank again upon her knees beside the corpse, and only answered our entreaties by a vacant stare, and even more expressionless smile.

I suggested to Amy that we could do nothing further until the mistress of the house could be found; and Amy, overcoming her usual timidity, instantly went in search of her.

Amy's absence appeared to me, in my present excited state, so protracted that I was on the point of seeking her, when she made her appearance. She was accompanied by a fat old woman with a round dough-like face, the expression of which might have bespoken considera-

ble asperity of character, if that were consistent with such a superabundant quantity of *en bon point*.

We could not converse with perfect freedom before the young girl, I therefore beckoned to the woman to follow me into the entry.

"Are you well acquainted with that young girl?" inquired I, after closing the door.

"Not particularly; nor I don't want much acquaintance with the like of her," was the tart answer.

Her father boarded with you, did he not?"

"Yes."

"Can you give me any information concerning him?" Observing that the woman looked indisposed to submit to this cross-questioning, I added, "You will very much oblige me if you can, and you will not yourself be a loser."

The probable prospect of gain unloosed her tongue. "I'll tell you all I know about him, and very willingly," she began. "He was an old Frenchman, I believe, and came to live with me about a year ago. He never worked at any trade that I know of, and seemed to be as poor as a rat, but he paid his board regular. He was very silent and sad, and sat sometimes the whole day in his own room without even stirring.

"Nobody knew what he was about. His health failed him from the first, I think, and he got worse every day. About a month ago he took to his bed, and I saw right off that he wasn't long for this world, and he said himself that his time was come. Just a week before he died, one day I heard a great noise in his room and went in to see what was the matter. And who should I find standing by his bed but the girl inside there! She was screaming and crying and taking on at a great rate. But the old man was lying so quiet in his bed, and looked so pale, that I thought he was dead. But the life was in him yet, for he opened his eyes, but never spoke a word.

"From that day to this, the girl has never left him for a whole hour. She said she was his daughter, but I never saw her before. I reckon it's a little out of her

right mind she is, for she don't seem to eat, nor to sleep, and she's always muttering and talking to herself. I never heard the old man say much from the day that she came to nurse him. I believe that he died in the night, for yesterday morning I found her lying on the bed beside him, with her arms about his neck, and he as cold as a stone.

"My husband carried her out of the room and locked her up while we laid the old man in his coffin, as decent as might be; and then we were obliged to let her see him again, for her shrieks frightened all the neighbors. Sometimes she runs through the streets, tearing about like a mad woman, and threatening everybody she meets. Then she comes back here, and cries, and talks, as though anybody could understand her."

"Who pays the expenses of the funeral?" I asked.

The woman colored and stammered out, "Why—why you see—the old Frenchman had one or two chairs and some old clothes, not worth a dollar, and a few odd things—and—and—my husband, he sold them to get money for the funeral."

"When is he to be buried?"

"This afternoon."

"And what will become of the daughter?"

"If she can pay her board she's welcome to stay, if she can't she must go about her business."

"Do you think that she has any means of paying?"

"I shouldn't wonder if she hadn't, and she don't seem to have the wit to look after herself."

"What are we to do?" said I turning to Amy, for I was quite perplexed.

"We must take her home with us as soon as her father is buried; and if she has no friends we can take her back to New York. My father will be very willing to pay all her expenses for the sake of gratifying me."

"Of that I am certain," replied I, "we will take her to New York, and if she can work at any trade I will find her employment; if not, perhaps you may engage her as a *femme de chambre*?"

"But we have already a very excellent girl with whom mother would be unwilling to part."

"Then I myself must appropriate her until such time as I can procure her other employment."

I told the woman that we were interested in the girl and would take her home with us after the funeral. We then took our leave promising to return in the afternoon, and assuring the woman that we would compensate her well if she kept an eye upon the girl and saw that she did no violence to herself.

We left without again entering the room.

In the afternoon we returned in a carriage. The hearse, a most forlorn and dilapidated looking affair, was already standing at the door. We entered and found two men in the act of screwing the lid over the coffin. The young girl was vehemently struggling in the arms of a third. I spare you a recital of the frightful scene which ensued. It was too terrible, too harrowing, and the very recollection of it freezes the blood in my veins.

At last the coffin was borne from the room and the dismal hearse soon rolled from the door, unfollowed by a single mourner. In half an hour more the desolate creature was seated by my side in the carriage.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellwell, who may be numbered amongst the most kind-hearted people in creation, anxiously awaited us at the hotel. When we arrived our companion followed us unresistingly, and without seeming to notice what was taking place around her. Mrs. Ellwell administered a cordial to her and she was undressed and laid in a comfortable bed. Amy insisted on sleeping in the same room. She told me this morning that she did not believe the wretched girl slumbered one hour through the night, although she laid perfectly quiet, but with her eyes wide open.

This morning she no longer weeps, but her quietude is that of despair. She scarcely eats, and never speaks, except when questioned. Her face and lips are perfectly bloodless, and her large, black eyes wander

anxiously about in search of some object never found.

Amy summons me and I must bid you adieu.

* * * * *

Afternoon.

I found Amy trying to pacify our unfortunate charge, who was seized with a fresh paroxysm of grief, and could scarcely be prevented from rushing out of the house.

I sat down beside her and she soon grew quiet again. I thought this a favorable moment for conversation, and asked, "Have you any friends in Charleston?"

She shook her head in answer.

"Would you like to accompany us to the North?"

She looked up and exclaimed, "To the North? Yes! yes! I will go! It is there I want to go!"

"We are going to New York," I continued; "will you accompany us?"

"Willingly—gladly—it is there I wish to go!"

"Have you friends there?"

To this question she did not reply; but her eyes grew strangely fierce, and her face which had been flushed by excitement regained its former pallor.

"Have you been accustomed to work with your needle?" enquired I.

"No."

"Did you ever live at service?"

"No."

"You are very young—you cannot be more than eighteen."

"No."

"And your father was able to maintain you?"

She caught my hand convulsively in her own. "Do not speak of him—never—never mention his name—or you will set me mad again! I will do anything you please—I will serve you—work for you—but do not mention my—my——"

The word "father" could find no utterance.

"One question more I must ask you," returned I. "You will tell me your name?"

"Call me by what name you please—give me a name; but let me forget the one that I have——"

"We will call you Blanche," said Amy, "it is a French name, and therefore would suit you: do you like it?"

The girl bowed her head, and this was sufficient answer. She appeared uneasy and ill, and I thought it best not to continue our conversation. We left her to regain her composure, hoping that the hour would come when her peace of mind might be entirely restored.

She has been unfortunate, perhaps guilty, but to discard her would be to force her to the commission of further crime. How many plunge into a vortex of vice from which they *would willingly but cannot* withdraw, because

"Every wo a tear may claim,
Except an erring sister's shame!"

* * * * *

October 5th.

Mr. Ellwell has just announced to us that we are to sail for New York in the packet which leaves day after to-morrow. We are all so busy making the necessary arrangements, that I can write you but a few lines. My next letter, if heaven permits us to accomplish our journey in safety, will be dated from New York.

Blanche continues very calm, but silent, sorrowful, and smileless. I cannot help longing to become acquainted with her history—but time will disclose all that it is good for us to know.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Time to the yielding mind his charge imparts,
He varies notions, and he alters hearts."

CRABBE.

From the Same to the Same.

New York, October 25th.

ONCE more I find myself in my quiet little chamber at Fleecer's. It has not been inhabited since I left. Every dear, familiar article of furniture seems to have a tongue to welcome me back.

I look about me, and the place is peopled with phantom-like recollections. Truly Life is but a dream, and Death is the hour of our awakening from phantastic slumber!

We arrived day before yesterday, after an eleven days' voyage. As we stepped on shore a crowd of little newsboys thronged about the passengers. I was hardly certain that land was beneath my feet before a book was thrust in my face, and a shrill voice sang out "New publication—translation from the French—just out!"

The title of the book caught my eye, and to my delight I found it to be Ellen's tale. While I was hurriedly extracting a shilling from my purse to pay for the book, a voice beside me exclaimed in a tone of surprise:

"You don't say so? Why it's you, is it? So you don't know me? You never did know much. That's a green one!"

I looked around and peering into ! It knew him.

's icy, rosy face,

I hardly

with it.

wore to protect his clothes, the water-proof cap on his head, and the large, carefully bound cover of leather in which his books were wrapped, were not at all suited to the ragged urchin with a swollen eye, and bruised face, who answered in my recollection to the name of Billy.

"Why, Billy!" said I, after the first look of wonder: "Why, I hardly know you! When have you seen Miss Ellen? And how are you all?"

"First rate!" answered Billy, in a rather boisterous tone. "All first rate! Miss Ellen's as good as—as good as pumpkin pie. Mother gets along bravely with her washing, and she's got two or three boarders: Netta can read, and write, and sew: Bubby's picking up: Father's getting better, and Granny's dead: so we're all thriving!"

"And how is Mark, The Smasher?" asked I jestingly.

The boy took it for granted that I must feel a real interest in Mark, and answered: "Mark's well—big bug as ever—Mark's doing a great business. I intend to be Smasher myself one of these days!"

As he uttered these last words he doubled up his fists and for a moment threw himself into a boxing position.

I laughed, and said; "This book, Billy, how does it sell?"

"Goes off like hot cakes! Can't get enough of them!"

Before I could ask any more questions, an old man, who seemed inclined to buy, attracted his attention, and he darted towards the person lustily, making way for himself by pushing sideways through the crowd.

We entered a carriage, and in half an hour Blanche and I were at Fleecer's door. We parted with our kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ellwell, and Amy, on the dock. Blanche has been very ill throughout the voyage, and has gradually wasted away, but she is uncomplaining, and as silent as ever.

Fleecer received me at the door, eyed my "little *creole* waiting-maid," as he called her, escorted me to my room, and then showed me a small closet, with a win-

dow opening in the entry, which was appropriated to Blanche.

As we were ascending the stairs, the first person whom I encountered was Laura Hilson. She stopped, and affected great delight on seeing me; but this pretended pleasure was not reciprocated. I could not forbear inquiring after my friends the Willards and Merritts.

"They are all well;" replied Laura. "Evelyn looks as beautiful as ever, and is as great belle. I see her every day—so does *the Colonel*—for he is still a reigning favourite!"

This last sentence was uttered in a malicious tone, and though in all probability a mere jest, it troubled me. I turned away, hastily mounted the stairs, and as soon as I could dismiss Fleecer, who seemed inclined to remain and talk, commenced changing my travelling dress. I was more anxious than ever to see Evelyn and Ellen, and made up my mind to pay a visit to Union Place forthwith.

My toilet was soon completed. I was rather unwilling to leave Blanche, for at times her mind appears to wander, but she now seemed so calm, and so completely absorbed in unpacking and arranging my clothes, that I thought I could absent myself with safety. Before I had been in the city three quarters of an hour, I found myself in one of the Broadway omnibuses on my way to Union Place. I arrived at Mr. Merritt's, and was admitted by the grinning mulatto waiter, who recognized me. The other ladies were not at home, he said, but I would find Mrs. Merritt in the drawing-room.

He opened the door of the front parlor for me, and I entered. No person was visible. I was about to cross the room and ring the bell, when my ear caught the sound of a low, rich voice, proceeding from the back parlour, and reading in an impassioned tone the following passage from Byron's *Sardanapalus* :

"Let me deem

That some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,
Communicates between us, though unseen,
In absence, and attracts us to each other!"

I did not immediately recognize the voice, but it was not Evelyn's, nor did it proceed from feminine lips. My fears whispered to whom that musical tone belonged, but my hopes denied the suggestion.

As soon as I could gather courage I advanced towards the folding doors, which were open. My footsteps were unheard. I beheld Evelyn sitting upon the sofa with her cheek leaning upon her hand, and her exuberant hair falling in such thick clusters about her shoulders, that her face was almost entirely concealed. Her eyes were cast down, and even through the shading ringlets I could discern the bright flush that crimsoned her cheeks. Upon an ottoman beside her sat Colonel Damoreau with a volume of Byron's poems in his hand.

Ever and anon as he read he glanced at Evelyn, but her eyes remained fixed upon the floor. When he finished the passage which I have quoted, he paused, slowly closed the book, and very gently laid his hand upon the one of Evelyn's which was lying on the arm of the sofa. She started slightly, and, raising her eyes, they encountered—not Colonel Damoreau's—but mine! She sprang up with a terrified scream, and gazed at me as though she beheld an apparition!

Colonel Damoreau also rose. For a moment not one of us moved—we all seemed petrified. I was the first to break the spell, and advanced towards Evelyn. The instant I approached, she threw herself into my arms, exclaiming, "Oh! I thought that it was your spirit, come to rebuke me!"

Before I could reply, except by returning her embrace, Colonel Damoreau perfectly regained his self-possession. Addressing me in his earnest and melodious voice, he expressed great delight at my return; railed, but very playfully, at Evelyn's nervousness, and conversed *for us* until we were both able to speak.

I made some sort of unmeaning reply to his courteous salutation; and then turned to Evelyn and asked after her husband, her mother, and sister.

"They are all well, but they are not at home," answered Evelyn in a voice still tremulous from agitation.

“And the little cherub?”

Evelyn's face instantly brightened, and she replied: “Lilla! Do you know that we call her Lilla because she is so like a lily bud? A very frond lily! You shall see her.”

She ran out of the room, and quickly returned with the child in her arms—a beautiful but delicate looking infant of six months old.

The babe did indeed resemble a lily, for its skin was as white as a snow-drift, and of the finest texture. Its eyes were of that clear celestial blue which we never see except in the innocent eyes of infants; and its hair, which just began to curl in short, silken rings, about its broad brow, was of a golden-flaxen color. There was something almost unearthly in its loveliness—an angelic expression in its soft eyes and about its sweet lips which made the heart thrill, and forced us to remember that we are not of this world alone.

Evelyn tried to place the lovely little creature on my lap, but it twined its white arms about the young mother's neck, and shyly hid its smiling face in her bosom.

While I was conversing with Evelyn, Colonel Damoreau attracted the babe's attention by his glittering chain and watch, and finally lured it into his arms. As he tenderly bent to kiss the infant's forehead, my ears, (which were always quick,) caught the sound of words which were doubtless intended for Evelyn alone. He murmured in a very low and touching voice—

“When first I saw thy favourite child,
Methought my jealous heart would break;
But when th' unconscious infant smiled,
I kissed it for its mother's sake!”

I knew that Evelyn heard these whispered lines, for her varying countenance ever betrays her emotions.

I was beginning to feel uncomfortable, when the bell rang, and a moment afterwards Mrs. Willard and Ellen entered.

They greeted me with hearty warmth. Ellen's cheek

was wet with tears of joy as it touched mine. Those tears enhanced to me the value of my existence.

"We have missed you so much!" said Mrs. Willard. "I have not found a substitute who could fill your place as counsellor, assistant, and friendly sympathiser! The fact is, Kate, you are a most *convenient* friend, and you always delight in being a convenience which other people hate"

Without vanity, I may say that Mrs. Willard spoke truly.

I will not pretend to relate to you the conversation which ensued. We all talked loudly, and sometimes all of us together; relating adventures, asking and answering questions, and last not least, admiring the lovely infant which Evelyn still held.

Mrs. Willard appears to be as fond of this child as if it were her own. It sleeps with her at night, (for she would not permit Evelyn's rest to be disturbed by its presence,) and it is the grandmother who performs the larger portion of a mother's offices. The child is the idol of the whole house. Mrs. Willard told me that even Mr. Merritt so far forgot his dignity as to creep about the floor in playing with the darling infant; and that he was never so proud and so happy as when dancing his little daughter upon his knee.

My stay was short, for I felt anxious about Blanche. In spite of the earnest entreaties of Evelyn and Ellen and their mother, who wished me to remain, I persisted in returning home before dinner. Nor was Colonel Damoreau's persuasive voice wholly silent; he begged that I would yield to the wishes of my friends, but his petition also was unsuccessful.

"I will go with you," said Ellen, tying on her bonnet, which she had thrown upon the sofa.

"And, if Miss Bolton will permit me, I will escort her," said Colonel Damoreau, courteously.

My permission I would willingly have withheld, for I desired to converse with Ellen unrestrainedly; but politeness shut the door upon inclination.

Colonel Damoreau walked between Ellen and myself,

and soon made himself so agreeable that I forgot my disappointment. His manners are so insinuating, that it is almost impossible to mistrust or think ill of him. Yet you dread the charm even while its spell-like fascination is binding your reason.

We had almost reached Fleecer's when we unexpectedly encountered Mr. Willard. His appearance was so much improved—he looked so much livelier, in so much better health, that I hardly recognized him.

"Miss Bolton!" he cried, extending both hands to me: "Is this you? Why how charmingly you are looking!"

Have you never remarked that the appearance which outward objects wear varies with the state of our mind, and that the change is generally in ourselves, though we think we behold it in others? Mr. Willard reminded me of Crabbe's lines:

"It is the soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the mind describes,
And thence delight, disgust, or cool indifference rises.
When minds are joyful, then we look around,
And what is seen is all on fairy ground;
Again they sicken, and on every view
Cast their own dull and melancholy hue."

To my great surprise, Mr. Willard insisted upon my taking his arm, and turned back to accompany me home.

I complimented him upon his improved appearance, and he answered: "Why I think sometimes that I have recovered my health by some miracle! I never enjoyed life before. Miss Katerine! Miss Katerine! you don't know what it is to have such a daughter as my Ellen! Indeed, I'm sure you don't!"

I could hardly repress a smile at the earnestness with which he persuaded me of this self-evident fact.

"Ellen and I are cronies—actual cronies!" he continued: "Of a fine afternoon we sometimes take a trip to Hoboken together and walk through the Elysian fields—sometimes we take the stage and ride to the Narrows, and sometimes we spend the day fishing. You can't think how fond Ellen is of these little excursions in the

country, and she is always planning some amusement for me. It is worth getting up in the morning, just to hear her read for half an hour before breakfast. Then she takes me round amongst her poor folks, and they know me almost as well as they know her. We've had pleasant times together since you saw us!"

Mr. Willard was quite out of breath and obliged to pause: I had never heard him speak so much at a time before; my surprise would have kept me silent had he continued, but we were already in front of Fleecer's door.

Mr. Willard and Colonel Damoreau bade us good morning. Ellen entered with me, but I detained her a few moments in the hall before we ascended to my room. I wished to propose her to see Blanche, and related that unfortunate being's history as far as it was known to me. Ellen listened with sympathising attention, and answered that she hoped it would be in her power to be of some service.

"How are all your good people!" enquired I, adding, "I have seen Billy, and he was selling your book."

"Was he?" answered Ellen. "I was not aware that it had appeared. I am sure you hardly knew Billy, he is so altered. I had great difficulty in effecting any change in his character or manners, but he has now become so attached to me that in my presence he is perfectly docile. I instruct him for an hour every Sunday morning, and often succeed in persuading him to go to church instead of playing about the streets. Netta and the mother—but there is no need of recounting how much trouble they have given me. The father appeared to be an incorrigible drunkard, but two weeks ago the labors of six months were rewarded and I succeeded in making him sign the temperance pledge. At first the rejection was dreadful, he was melancholy and most miserable, and seemed almost inclined to commit suicide. I did what I could to ameliorate his condition, and his restoration now seems complete."

I looked at Ellen with inexpressible pleasure while she

was uttering these words—but she needed not my praise—her heart's approval was sufficient reward.

I passed on, and she followed me to my chamber. On opening the door I was surprised to behold the room in almost greater confusion than I had left it some hours before. Open trunks, with their contents half emptied upon the floor—band-boxes, carpet-bags, and travelling-clothes were lying about in most inelegant disorder. Blanche was sitting at the window with her forehead leaning against the pane, and her eyes intently fixed upon the street.

She did not notice our entrance. I pronounced her name and she turned slowly round as though to receive my commands. Her face wore its usual troubled expression and her eyes looked red and wearied—they had been strained with watching.

“Were you watching for me?” I enquired.

“No,” she replied in an almost inaudible tone, and with her eyes bent upon the ground.

“Were you seeking any body else?”

She looked at me, and then glanced again at the window but did not answer. I am now quite convinced that at times her mind wanders.

Ellen and I instantly busied ourselves in arranging the room, and Blanche, unbidden, took part in our labours. I remarked that she seemed fatigued, and begged her to go to her own chamber and lie down. She invariably obeys me with almost child-like submission, and instantly glided out of the apartment.

“How young—how beautiful—how interesting she is!” exclaimed Ellen as the door closed upon Blanche. “But she is certainly deranged, her eyes look so sad and yet so wild.”

I would not permit myself to be persuaded of her positive insanity, and tried to convince Ellen that sorrow and madness were twin sisters.

Ellen dined with me that day. Shall I confess that my eyes involuntarily wandered round the room in search of a face which they did not discover? There were several empty chairs by the table, but they were

filled before dinner was ended—filled by strangers. I could not command my voice to ask after an absent friend. I have been here two days and have not seen him, neither have I made a single enquiry.

* * * * *

Evening.

Dearest Elizabeth, my hand trembles as I write, and I can hardly frame language for my thoughts. I was stealing through the dimly lighted entry to my chamber this evening when I was suddenly accosted.

“Miss Katerine! Kate!” said a voice beside me—a voice husky with joyful emotion.

I looked up, and beheld Mr. Elton! He had just returned from a short excursion in the country.

Thrown off of my guard by surprise and joy, I incautiously exclaimed: “Oh! I am so delighted to see you! I was afraid that you had left the house!” I had hardly spoken these words before I repented them, for their effect was visible upon Mr. Elton’s countenance.

“Permit me to say a few words to you?” said he in an earnest voice.

“Excuse me now,” I replied as calmly as possible. “It is too late for me to return to the parlour.”

“Then, for once, admit me into your boudoir. Do not refuse this trivial request—my peace of mind depends upon your granting it.”

“I regret that I am forced to refuse you,” I replied.

“But I can take no refusal—you *must* listen to me this once. Ah! have you forgotten the past?” he whispered, “those happy days—the only bright ones of my life!”

My heart mutely answered that I remembered them but too well.

“Are you not satisfied by my repentance? Can you not pardon the one fault which I have expiated by so many years of misery?”

“I have pardoned it,” I answered, but I feared that my words were scarcely audible.

“Then why can we not banish all unpleasant recollections and be what we *have been*?”

“Because we are neither of us fitted to be more than we *are* to each other.”

“Katerine,” he began, “do not deceive yourself—ask your heart why you now tremble. If I have still the power of awakening any emotion in your breast, I cannot be wholly an object of indifference to you!”

I was trying to frame an answer, perhaps one which would preclude all hope—perhaps one—but I do not know myself what I was about to say, when my room-door opened, and Blanche stealthily passed out with a candle in her hand.

I was in hopes that as we stood at the further end of the entry, she would not perceive us. With slow steps she approached, and was about to descend the stairs, when a slight movement of Mr. Elton’s attracted her attention. She looked up—started back, and gazed an instant in his face, then rushed towards him with a loud shriek, uttered his name, and fell fainting at his feet!

Judge of my surprise—my terror—my horror!

Mr. Elton raised her in his arms, bore her to my room, to which I mechanically led the way, and laid her upon the sofa. I had hardly strength to dash water in her face or chafe her hands; and Mr. Elton, whispering something about sending me proper assistance, retired.

In a few moments Blanche revived. She opened her eyes—looked fearfully about her—took my hand, and placing it on her now burning head, said, “I am mad, am I not?”

I bent over her, and my tears fell upon her face; for, strange as it may seem, the horrible thought which must now be always connected with her image, made her dearer to me than ever.

She wiped away the tears as though they had been her own, and asked, “Have I seen anybody? Did I dream? My head is frightfully confused. How dreadful it is to be so bewildered!”

“You must go to bed and sleep,” I replied. She instantly rose, and I supported her to her chamber. I

remained by her side until she sank into a quiet sleep. With how troubled a heart did I then return to my room to pen you these hasty lines!

You well know how great was my grief when my confidence in Mr. Elton was first shaken—but now, in what darker light must I regard him?

CHAPTER XX.

“ Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,
And given my treasure and my rights in thee
To thick-eyed musing, and cursed melancholy?

Henry IV.

From the Same to the Same.

October 21st.

WHAT exalted heart would ever entertain even a momentary prejudice? What generous mind would ever suffer itself to be warped by an antipathy? Surely none. Then is my heart little exalted, and my mind far from generous, for I cannot overcome the prejudice I have conceived, the antipathy I feel for one who may not deserve my aversion—that one is Laura Hilson. There is an expression constantly playing over her bold, but handsome features which I dread, but cannot comprehend—there is a sinister look in her beady black eyes which always conjure up in my thoughts the small, shining, blinking eyes of a snake.

During my absence, Laura and Evelyn have become extremely intimate. And yet there can be no sympathy between them. Contrast alone can have united them, for opposites sometimes blend harmoniously.

My devotion to Blanche, who has been seriously indisposed, has prevented my seeing Evelyn frequently of

late. I set apart this afternoon and evening, to spend with her, leaving Amy to watch my unhappy patient.

Evelyn and Laura were sitting by the window, apparently engaged in some very interesting discussion; Laura was weaving a long bugled fillet for Evelyn's hair, and Evelyn was selecting the proper-sized bugles, and handing them to Laura as she worked.

"What affairs of state are you discussing?" asked I, taking a seat beside them.

At first neither answered; but Evelyn soon said, "I am sure I can hardly explain to you what we were talking about. I believe the subject was love; or, rather constancy in love—or, I might better say under what circumstances love must change."

"I maintain," rejoined Laura, "that although a woman may be united to a man, should she meet another man personally more attractive, superior in every respect to her husband, that she would insensibly be forced to acknowledge the superiority of the one, and the inferiority of the other; and that it is natural for us to love best what is worthiest of our love."

"Your reasoning is certainly very *moral*," I replied; "but hardly so philosophical as you may suppose."

"But," said Evelyn with energy, "it is certainly true, Carissima, that we cannot blind our eyes to the defects, even of one who may possess the imposing title of husband. And we cannot help acknowledging,"—

"According to your argument," said I, purposely interrupting Evelyn, and addressing myself to Laura; "conjugal fidelity would be but an empty sound, and conjugal happiness an emptier one. Every woman would turn from the husband of her early choice, the father of her children, her companion through life to bestow her affections upon some highly-favored individual, who had won his country's applause, and the world's approbation. Such men as Washington and La Fayette would monopolize all the feminine affection in the universe. The man who possessed great talent, high worth, and peculiar fascination, would, instead of a blessing, be a curse to mankind, for he would rob every fireside of its harmony and peace."

“Analyse the nature of love and you will see your error. In what does love consist? What attracts two individuals to each other? Not, as you would suppose, the possession by either of those qualities which are most venerated by the world at large. Their hearts are united by mysterious sympathies, by sweet affinities which form an invisible link between them. The nature of these secret sympathies, these incomprehensible affinities, it would be almost impossible to explain; but the history of the world shows that they exist, and that by their medium one spirit joins and blends itself with another. And that union truly deserves the name of *Love*.”

“Very lucidly explained,” replied Laura, ironically. “But suppose there is no love in the case,” she added, glancing at Evelyn. “Suppose a woman is united to a man whom she does not, and cannot love; how can she help loving some other man with whom she feels *this mysterious sympathy, this sweet affinity*, of which you so eloquently speak?”

“Reason and principle forbid the commission of every crime, and is not this a spiritual crime of the most heinous order? She should struggle against the growing passion as soon as she is conscious of its existence; and if her nature is pure, if she loves good better than evil, she will make every sacrifice and crush in the bud a feeling or sentiment which conscience forbids her to foster.”

“Oh! it is very easy to talk!” answered Laura, somewhat scornfully. “But I never yet knew a heart that would be *forced* to such obedience.”

And then, as though desirous of changing the subject, she rose from her seat, and encircling Evelyn’s head with the bugled band, said: “Let me see if this fillet will become you? Yes, you look charmingly. But, Evelyn, I must loop back these stray ringlets, that, as Colonel Damoreau says, ‘your Grecian head may look more Greek!’ You know that he admires your beautiful hair gathered into one rich knot behind.”

Evelyn, rather petulantly, seized the hand that was looping back the long curls; the ringlets fell again about her blushing face, and Laura was forced to desist.

“Where is Ellen and where is your mother?” inquired I.

“Ellen and father are paying some visits in Brooklyn, and mother is undressing Lilla for the night,” replied Evelyn.

I was about to request to see the little angel before she slept, when Mr. Merritt entered. Laura instantly rose, laid the unfinished fillet upon the table, and said: “It is getting quite dark, and I really must spend this evening at home; will you be kind enough to escort me, Mr. Merritt?”

Mr. Merritt politely, and, I think, willingly consented. I was glad to be relieved from Laura’s presence, yet I received the impression from a certain twinkling of her dark eyes that she had some object in this hasty retreat, although I could not divine what her motive might be.

Evelyn and I were left together. The door had hardly closed upon Laura and Mr. Merritt, when Evelyn seized both of my hands in hers, and asked in an excited tone: “Do you believe in destiny? Do you believe in an uncontrollable fate, which constrains and forces us to commit acts which we cannot bear to think upon?”

“No! but I believe in evil spirits who arouse our bad passions, and infusing evil into our souls, impel us to the commission of sinful deeds.”

“Then there must be good spirits to guard against the evil?”

“Undoubtedly; but if we love evil better than good, we unconsciously encourage the evil, but deprive the good of their power to influence us.”

“But if it is our nature to give place to the evil — if we would, but cannot overcome them?”

“If we sincerely desire to overcome, we shall and must be victorious. Oh! Evelyn!” added I, looking tenderly in her face, “I know that your heart is troubled, though you would willingly hide its anguish from me. When we parted, six months ago, you had a presentiment that your happiness would be impaired before we met — and your fears have been realized. But wake from your trance, my sweet Evelyn; struggle with your-

self—control yourself—be sure of a victory if you earnestly strive to conquer an unworthy passion. Think of the child, Evelyn, with which Heaven has blessed you! and let that thought inspire you with strength!”

Evelyn silently looked into my face, and after a long pause, exclaimed: “Oh! never leave me! I am afraid of myself. Why were you absent so long? If you could have only been here—if you could always be by me—could always counsel me—I might—might—”

She concluded her sentence with a remorseful sigh, and before I could add another word, we heard Colonel Damoreau’s voice in the entry.

I would have given all that I possess that we might have been spared his presence for a half hour longer. But it was too late; before I could plan any mode of escape for both of us, he was at Evelyn’s side.

In an instant her whole appearance changed. The bright blood mantled through her before pallid cheek. Her sadness, her fears, all vanished. His influence wrought like magic upon her spirits. She was gay, exhilarated—she forgot her own last words and mine; she was even almost forgetful of my presence.

The Colonel had hardly thrown himself upon an ottoman and commenced an animated conversation, when the door again opened, and Laura Hilson and Mr. Merritt re-appeared.

Laura instantly approached the table upon which she had left her bugles, saying that she came back for them. But an indescribable glance which she directed towards Evelyn, rendered me certain that by some unknown means Laura had become aware of Colonel Damoreau’s visit. I also thought that she had some motive for making Mr. Merritt acquainted with it at that particular moment.

Mr. Merritt’s care-worn face was unusually clouded. He greeted the Colonel with cold formality, and his eye rested a moment with a look of undisguisable suspicion upon Evelyn. To my surprise, she returned his glance with one of haughty composure, I might almost say of defiance. Her impetuous nature will not brook the slight-

est demonstration of tyranny. I do not comprehend all this; but it is evident that Colonel Damoreau, and his frequent visits, have at some time or other been a subject of discussion between the young husband and wife.

"I find that it is so late," said Laura, "that I shall only deprive Mr. Merritt of his tea if I take him home with me now; therefore, I think, Evelyn, that I will remain."

"Do so," said Evelyn, in a pleased tone, "Mr. Merritt will accompany you whenever you like."

"She no longer calls her husband 'Walter,' then?" thought I.

Mrs. Willard soon made her appearance, and tea was served. Colonel Damoreau, Evelyn, and Laura conversed very gayly. But Mr. Merritt was taciturn in the extreme, and Mrs. Willard devoted herself exclusively to him. There was one other person present whose silence was wholly inconsistent with her womanly prerogative—that person was myself.

Soon after tea Mrs. Willard, who caught the sound of Lilla's crying voice, disappeared. I found myself sitting at some distance from the others, but beside Mr. Merritt. His ceremonious gravity, his discontented countenance, and unbending sternness of manner, contrasted very unfavorably with Colonel Damoreau's ease, grace, and fluent brilliancy. I looked from one to the other, inwardly praying that Evelyn's eyes might not follow the example of mine.

"I am afraid you are not very well:" said I to Mr. Merritt.

"No, my health is not quite so good as it was once;" and he repressed a rising sigh.

"You have not sufficient relaxation—you attend too closely to your business engagements;" continued I.

"If it were not for that my own thoughts would make me commit suicide," he replied, suddenly aroused by my remark.

I hardly knew what to answer, but said, "You must take Evelyn upon some excursion to the country; it would do both of you good, and Mrs. Willard can keep her place in your absence."

"How do you know that Evelyn would go?"

"I am sure that she would if you requested her to accompany you."

"And I am sure that she would not. My requests have little weight with her," he replied bitterly.

"You wrong her—I am certain that you wrong her."

"If I thought I did I should be happy—almost as happy as I might be if I did not think that she hourly wronged me."

"Indeed you are very severe, and even unjust," I replied. "Evelyn is young, gay, very thoughtless, and very wayward. She has never been used to control, and she cannot submit herself. But though force cannot compel her, she is easily moved by gentle entreaty."

"I have tried both, but it is unmanly for me to talk to you in this manner. You must not mind what I have been saying:" added he, recovering himself: "I believe that I am a little out of humor; some unsuccessful business transactions have disturbed me—and Evelyn is so beautiful—so loveable—you know that I love her?"

"I am sure that you do, and you will ever have cause to love her, in spite of her failings, which are those of youth and inexperience."

"I must leave you, Evelyn dear," said Laura, rising abruptly. "I suppose that you will accompany us, Miss Bolton?" she added, turning to me.

I was on the point of answering in the affirmative, when I caught a glimpse of Mr. Merritt's disturbed countenance, and replied, "No, I will remain a little longer. I think I can calculate upon Colonel Damoreau's well known gallantry, should I desire him to escort me when I wish to return."

Colonel Damoreau instantly rose, with a smile upon his lips, and said in an affable manner; "I am always at your service, Miss Bolton; I feel flattered by your request."

Mr. Merritt pressed my hand as he bade me good evening; and he looked the thanks to which pride would never have permitted him to give utterance.

My stay was but short after Laura's departure. I

bade Evelyn good night, and Colonel Davenport accompanied me home. I was very anxious to converse with him about Evelyn—to make him feel that he was exerting a pernicious influence over her, and perhaps undermining the happiness of her whole life; but I found the task as difficult as it would have been useless. I soon discovered that I had no control over the conversation which flowed into whatever channel he chose.

You have doubtless been acquainted with men who possessed a will so strong that it invested them with a dangerous and almost unlimited power over all weaker minds? Such a man is Colonel Davenport. But Evelyn is not naturally weak-minded, though her character has never been strengthened by trial and experience.

When I entered Blanche's chamber, or rather closet, I found her quietly slumbering; and Amy, wearied with watching, had fallen asleep in a chair beside the bed. She was roused by my entrance.

"I am very sorry that I kept you here so late," said I.
 "I have been quite contented," replied Amy, in her usual mild voice. "Blanche has been talking very wildly about her father, and vowing vengeance upon his murderer and the destroyer of her peace. She is feverish, and has been delirious. Father came for me an hour ago, but I begged him to permit me to remain with you all night, that we might relieve each other in watching by Blanche. I really think that she ought not to be left alone. You will share your bed with me, will you not?"

You may imagine my answer to this kind inquiry.

I forced Amy to lie down, promising to wake her at one o'clock; and after wrapping myself in a warm dress, took my station beside Blanche's couch. You see in what manner I have succeeded in benumbing sleep—I have passed the hours in writing to you.

Amy's demeanor has undergone a complete change since her return to New York. Some painful recollections, forgotten during our absence, have been reawakened. Her tone and look would seem to say that she has some hidden sorrow—and yet what sorrow could she have? Her parents never opposed her most violent

able wishes—she has wealth—her health is restored—what can her grief be? If she loved, surely her love would be returned—but whom could she love? I am acquainted with most of her friends, and never beheld her evince any preference.

I believe I did not mention to you that Blanche is only nominally to be my attendant, or rather, that her services are to be mine, but that Amy chooses to defray the girl's expenses herself. I was forced to accept this offer, for I am wholly unable to support Blanche, and she is equally unable to work.

I have nearly concluded this letter without one word about Mr. Elton. But I need not tell you that I have shunned him, and that I intend he shall have no further opportunity of conversing with me in private. He appears to be wounded by my coldness, but its origin he of course understands. He has several times requested an interview with me, but I shall remain inexorable in my refusal. When I look at Blanche and think of her blighted existence, my heart is closed against her betrayer.

One o'clock is striking, and I must wake Amy, who would not pardon me if I failed to fulfil my promise. Adieu!

CHAPTER XX.

“ Women are soft, mild, pitiable, flexible,
But thou art obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.”

Henry IV.

“ She hath spoken that she should not—I am sure of that.”

Macbeth.

From the Same to the Same.

October 26th.

TRULY “ the web of life is of a mingled yarn,” and the dark threads are beginning to manifest themselves in the once golden web of our beloved Evelyn’s existence. Last eve the usual little family circle gathered around Mr. Merritt’s fireside. Laura Hilson and I were the only two visitors; and we are such constant guests, that we are almost regarded as members of the family. The tea-table was spread; the brightly polished kettle hissed upon a chafing-dish beside it; the twilight was deepening, and the waiter had entered to light the lamps, yet Evelyn had not returned from her walk.

Conversation flagged. Mr. Merritt fidgeted about the room, now and then walking up to the window, but suddenly turning away again, without venturing to look out, for fear that the cause of his uneasiness should be discovered. Ellen looked anxious, and her father dull. Mrs. Willard made two or three irremediable mistakes in her lace edging, and finally laid down her knitting needles. A malicious smile hovered about Laura’s lips as she surveyed the family group, and broke a momentary pause by remarking, “ What *can* have become of *Evelyn!* It is getting quite dark !”

Every tongue was instantly unloosed.

"She must have met with some accident!" said Mrs. Willard.

"An accident!" cried Mr. Merritt and Ellen in alarm. "Oh! I'll warrant that she is quite safe," said Laura, "and has entirely forgotten that the hissing of the kettle gives us strong inclination for a cup of Bohea. No doubt she is well entertained."

"She only went out to take a short walk," replied Ellen.

"What can have happened? What *can* have happened?" repeated Mr. Merritt to himself in a low tone.

"There is a ring!" said Mrs. Willard, starting up and hastening out of the room.

Before Mr. Merritt could follow her, she returned, leading in Evelyn. As the strong light of the solar lamp fell upon Evelyn's face, she covered her eyes with her hands as though that sudden brightness pained them. But her action was not so quick that it prevented my remarking that her cheeks were flushed, and that she looked as though she had been shedding tears.

"Who escorted you home, fair lady?" inquired Laura.

"Were you alone?" asked Mrs. Willard.

"Where have you been, Evelyn?" questioned Mr. Merritt at the same moment.

"Whose question am I to answer first?" replied Evelyn in a tone of forced gaiety.

"Your husband's, of course, he having the best right to be inquisitive;" said her mother, smiling upon Mr. Merritt. "He asked where you had been?"

"I have been shopping and taking a walk. When it began to grow dark, I discovered that I was further from home than I imagined."

Evelyn did not look towards Mr. Merritt, as she spoke these words.

"Who accompanied you? Who brought you home?" again asked Laura, fixing her small, black eyes scrutinizingly upon Evelyn's face.

Mr. Merritt eagerly advanced to hear his wife's answer.

The color forsook Evelyn's cheek, and for a moment

she did not reply. Laura repeated her question, and Evelyn assuming an air of badinage, answered, "Daughter of Eve, restrain thy curiosity!"

"You should not have walked at such a late hour *alone*, Evelyn!" said Mrs. Willard, with an air which was intended to convey the impression that she was confident her daughter had been unattended.

"You *have* been walking *alone* then?" inquired Mr. Merritt, who was evidently desirous of asking a direct question.

"Yes!" replied Evelyn firmly, and looking about her as she spoke.

"Did you say *alone*?" persisted Laura as though she was determined not to let the subject drop. "Had you no escort—no companion?"

"None but my own agreeable thoughts," replied Evelyn, untying her bonnet, "and those would have been brighter for a cup of tea. Come, let us sit down. Pray, mother, help me to the first cup, for I am wearied to death."

We took our seats at the tea-table, and the gaiety of the whole party was speedily restored. Of all but Laura, who appeared to be disconcerted, and who, with her untasted cup of tea before her, amused herself by balancing her tea-spoon on the tip of her finger, while she watched Evelyn's lightest movements.

We were just rising from table, when our ears were saluted by a voice whose rough tones were but too familiar.

"How do you do? How do you all do? Here you all are, hey? Just finished tea, have you? Here! halloo, waiter! Hold on, I'll take a cup myself."

Richard bowed all round with a face as red as a piony, as he shouted out these words, and stalked into the back parlor. Mrs. Willard followed him, and resumed her seat in front of the tea-tray. Much to my surprise, Evelyn ordered the folding doors to be closed. She is generally quite unmoved by the presence of her uncouth brother, but on this occasion her distress, and even alarm were so marked, that I at one moment thought she was fainting.

We took our seats near the inviting fire. Laura drew from her bag a slipper which she was embroidering for Mr. Merritt. Ellen brought forth her work. She was quilting a little hood for Netta, and I employed myself in hemming the ruffle that was to pass round the front. Evelyn took up Laura's scissors and commenced clipping a piece of note paper which lay in Ellen's basket; but her eyes turned constantly and uneasily towards the folding doors.

We could hear Richard talking loudly with his mother, but could not distinguish his words. Before many minutes the doors were thrown open, and Richard entered crying out, "Nonsense, nonsense, mother. I tell you, I've had enough! Enough's as good as a feast. Don't take away a man's independence by making him eat more than he wants, will you?"

As he concluded this sentence, he walked up to Evelyn, and seating himself beside her, took up the scissors and paper which she had tremblingly laid down at his approach, and commenced cutting the remnant of paper into long thin strips.

"This ain't quite as good fun as whittling, is it Evy?" said Richard. "Had a pleasant walk, hey, Evy, didn't you?"

"Yes, no, that is yes," replied Evelyn, composedly. She hastily added: "Here, Richard, I want you to look over these drawings, you know that you were always fond of pictures."

"To be sure I was! I always had a taste for the arts! And some critical notion of when a thing is anything, too, Evy; as the Colonel was saying—"

"But, Richard, you must really pay attention or I will close the portfolio."

"Call me Dick, will you?"

"Dick then—or dear Dick if you like that better," she whispered, and then added aloud: "You know that you cannot do two things at a time, so give your whole attention to these engravings." Evelyn's hands shook as she turned over the pictures, and her agitation did not escape Laura's notice. Mr. Merritt was sitting with his

back towards his wife, and his eyes were fixed upon the book before him, but they wandered not from the line, and no leaf was turned.

"Evy!" cried out Richard, snatching up one of the engravings, "There's a fellow looks like the Colonel! Don't it now? By the by did he make himself agreeable this afternoon?"

"Richard! Dick! Dick!" gasped out Evelyn seizing her brother's arm. "Look at this—you did not see that look at this picture! Is it not beautiful?"

"It's just like you, Evy!"

Evelyn held up the picture in such a manner that it concealed both of their faces, and her head was so close to her brother's that I felt certain she was whispering a few warning words in his ear.

"What? what? what do you say?" said Richard in a louder tone than before. "I can't hear—speak out like a woman. Never whisper in company—don't you know that's not manners? Never whisper! Never whisper!" Richard shook his head rebukingly at Evelyn as he uttered these words, and her distress was so visible, that I could no longer forbear approaching her.

I was on the point of engaging Richard in conversation when he abruptly turned to his sister and said: "I tell you what, Evy, I felt proud of you this afternoon, and it takes no little of the right stuff to make me proud. You looked so handsome with that splendid fellow walking by your side! You quite set him off, and that's what I tell the Colonel you always do!"

A deathlike silence followed these words. Mr. Merritt dropped his book and turned slowly round. Laura laid down her work and resting her chin on her hand, glanced from Mr. Merritt to Evelyn, and from Evelyn to Mr. Merritt. Mrs. Willard looked aghast, and Ellen hid her face in her work.

"You—you—you are mis—taken—Richard; not this afternoon—"

"Call me Dick, will you? I like *Dick*, its more independent."

"It was not *this* afternoon that you met your sister,"

said Mrs. Willard, rising. "You have forgotten, it was yesterday afternoon."

"Now you needn't think to come over me with that humbug," replied Richard, shaking his head. "I know what I'm about. It was this afternoon, and yesterday afternoon too—I met them both afternoons, and a splendid couple they made to be sure! Nothing like them in Broadway. I'd stake Evy against the handsomest woman in New York, and there isn't a man that treads shoe-leather who can hold a rush-light to my friend the Colonel!"

At these words Evelyn threw herself upon the sofa near which she was standing and hid her face in the pillow. The next moment she started up and rushed out of the room.

"Evy! Evy! where are you going? Come back!" shouted Richard: but not another voice was heard.

"Ellen," said Mrs. Willard, after a few moments silence, "go and see if the baby is asleep, and if the nurse wants me."

Ellen left the room and soon after Mrs. Willard followed her. When Ellen returned I rose to take my leave. Richard snatched up his hat as soon as he saw my intention. "I'll accompany you, Miss Kitty! I'll escort you! I'll take care of you! You'll be safe under my protection—we'll keep off the rowdies, never fear!"

I was forced to accept his offered arm, while Laura took that of Mr. Merritt.

Richard talked incessantly on our way home, but his questions needed no answer, and they were so little noticed by me that I could not now repeat a word that he said.

This morning I saw Laura despatch a note to Evelyn with orders that it should be delivered immediately. An hour afterwards, the fire in my room having died out, I carried my pen, ink and paper, to the back parlour, which was vacant. I was just in the midst of a letter to a friend when the sound of voices proceeding from the front drawing-room disturbed me. The doors were

closed but I could distinguish Laura's voice, and soon after I thought that I recognized Evelyn's softer tone.

The conversation gradually became so animated that it interrupted my thoughts as I wrote, and finally I could not avoid overhearing the whole concluding portion of the discourse. I should have risen and left the room, but was transfixed to the spot by mingled wonder and horror.

"Nay, Evelyn, you may throw aside your mask before me," said Laura. "I know all that you can tell me, and there are others who have as much knowledge on the subject as myself. The world has very piercing eyes and very censorious lips—it has already discovered that Colonel Damoreau is enamoured of the beautiful Mrs. Merritt, and the rumour is that Mrs. Merritt is far from insensible to the handsome Colonel Damoreau's fascinations."

"Oh! Laura! Laura!" whispered Evelyn in a choking voice, "For Heaven's sake spare me, Laura! It is not so—who would believe anything so dreadful?"

"The world believes it; and I, as your dearest friend, wish to prepare you for what you must expect at its hands. You have taken the fatal step, Evelyn. You have compromised yourself—you wear the appearance of guilt, and that is all which slander requires to blacken your name. You may be as innocent as an angel, yet who will believe in your purity?"

"But I am—I *am* innocent!"

"Are you innocent in heart? Do you not love Colonel Damoreau? Your looks—actions—words—have betrayed your passion a thousand times!"

I listened eagerly for Evelyn's reply, but alas! she made no answer. After a short pause I heard her ejaculate in a tone of deep anguish, "My child! my poor child! Ah, Laura! you forget that I am a mother!"

"Were I not your friend, Evelyn, I might reply that your guilt was the greater."

"But, mother—Walter—Ellen—they will not believe anything so horrible?"

"Husbands are generally the last to discover their own dishonor. But how can you suppose that the eyes

of your family will long be blinded, when they detected you last night in a—”

“I know it—a falsehood! It scorched my lips and withered my very soul as I uttered it—a falsehood!”

“A falsehood to conceal that you had been walking with Colonel Damoreau!”

“I am ruined!” almost shrieked Evelyn.

“You know that I am your friend—your true friend,” said Laura, in an insinuating tone. “You know that I tell you all this because I cannot bear to think of your disgrace. To be sure, it is too late now for you to hope to avoid a discovery, but perhaps you could escape your husband’s anger, and your mother’s bitter reproaches, with which you will be unmercifully assailed, when they find you discarded by *the world*.”

“I am ruined!” was Evelyn’s only answer.

“Mr. Merritt compares very ill with Colonel Damoreau!”

“You will distract me, Laura!” burst forth Evelyn.

“Are you a fiend, that you torment me thus? My head is on fire—I do not know myself whom I love—I only know that I am ruined! ruined!”

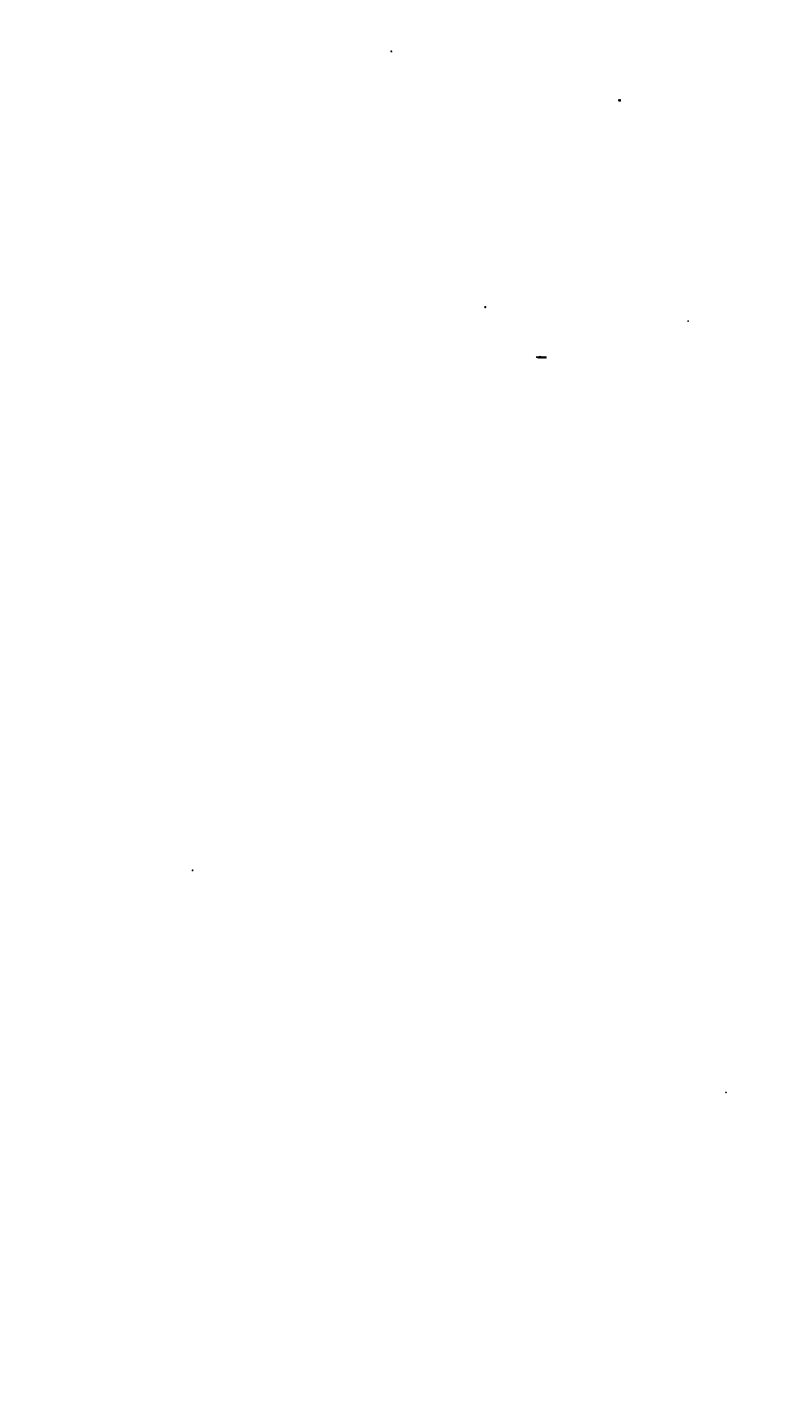
I heard the sound of her hands as they struck against her forehead, and she groaned out: “My lovely Lilla! My poor, poor child!”

“I grieve very deeply, Evelyn,” began Laura.

Evelyn interrupted her wildly—“You do *not* grieve—I know you now, Laura—you rejoice—you glory—you exult like a fiend over my misery! I see it in your eyes—I know it by the sound of your voice—you exult over my degradation and ruin! I never saw you in your true light until now! Your love is a vile pretence—it is not me—it is Walter whom you love!”

She paused a moment, and then suddenly exclaimed, in an altered tone: “Laura, forgive me! You have set me mad, and I do not know what I am saying! I have wounded you! Pardon me!”

“You have not at all wounded—you have only *misjudged me*,” replied Laura, almost with the calmness of conscientious virtue. “I wish,” she added, with winning



EVELYN;

OR

A HEART UNMASKED.

A TALE OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

BY

ANNA CORA MOWATT,

AUTHOR OF "FASHION," A COMEDY; "THE FORTUNE HUNTER," ETC.

"Oh! that I thought it could be in a woman
To feed for age her lamp and flame of love,
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays."

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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EVELYN.

CHAPTER I.

“And ye who for the living lost
That agony in secret bear,
Who shall with soothing words accost
The strength of your despair?”
BRYANT.

From the Same to the Same.

October 29th.

SCARCELY a couple of hours after I last wrote, I was startled by a messenger from Mrs. Willard, who inquired if Mrs. Merritt was dining with me. I answered that I had not seen her since two o'clock, at which hour she left here.

“Dinner has been waiting some time and Mrs. Willard thought that Mrs. Merritt must certainly be with you. Mr. Merritt would not sit down without hearing from her:” replied the man who brought the message.

He hastened away, and though I could not satisfy myself that I had any especial cause of uneasiness, I was agitated and alarmed. After giving a few directions to Blanche, I hurriedly attired myself in a warm garment, for the weather is growing exceedingly cold, and stepped into one of the Broadway omnibuses, which soon transported me to Mr. Merritt's door.

The family were assembled in the dining-room. Consternation was painted upon every face—Evelyn had not returned!

Mr. Merritt was the first one who accosted me: "How kind it is of you to come to us!" said he. "Where can Evelyn be? At what hour did she leave you? Can you imagine what has become of her?"

"She left me at about two o'clock," I replied, in as calm a tone as I could command.

"She was home a few minutes before three," said Ellen. "And her manner was so strange that it terrified me. I found her in the nursery, kneeling by the baby's cradle. I spoke to her several times before she heard: the instant she noticed me she snatched up little Lilla and covered her lips, cheeks, and forehead, even her little dimpled hands and feet, with the most passionate kisses. Then she laid the child back into the cradle and rocked it to sleep again. In a few moments she rose up and commenced walking about the room, and I saw her take up a little pink shoe of the baby's, which was lying upon the bureau. Thrusting the shoe into her pocket, she left the room. I followed her, but she appeared so much absorbed by her own thoughts that I was almost afraid to speak.

"After leaving the nursery she went into my room, and walked about as though she were examining the furniture. She snatched from the table a small book which I had just been reading, but observing me, laid it down again. A moment afterwards she stole out of the room and went into her own chamber.

"I could not help accompanying her, and she did not prevent me from doing so. For several minutes she glided thoughtfully about her own apartment, as she had walked through the nursery and mine. I again asked her if she was ill. She embraced me, and then looking tenderly in my face, said: 'Ellen promise that you will always love me—always and for ever! You could never hate me because I was miserable, could you?'"

"I hardly know what I answered, but after kissing me again, she begged that I would leave her. I withdrew

to my own room, and heard her turn the key of her door. I supposed that she was still in her chamber, when mother came and told me Evelyn could not be found."

To this narration I replied: "Well, after all, I do not see that there is any great cause for alarm; you know that Evelyn has very strange ways, and——"

Mr. Merritt seized upon this idea as though he found it a consoling one, and replied, "Yes, yes, she *has* very strange ways at times—they mean nothing—they are natural to her—they used to alarm me, but now I am accustomed to them; I am not in the least frightened."

"Perhaps she felt nervous and has gone to take a walk, thinking that the fresh air would restore her;" suggested Mrs. Willard. "It must have been late when she started, and she has probably forgotten that it was dinner time."

We were all willing to reassure ourselves with this belief, and instantaneously adopted Mrs. Willard's views.

"I think dinner had better be served, Walter," continued Mrs. Willard. "I can easily keep Evelyn's warm; and if she has taken a long walk she may not be here for some time."

"As you please," replied Mr. Merritt.

Dinner was accordingly placed upon the table, and we took our seats, but the dishes were soon removed, almost untasted. Mrs. Willard's efforts and my own to dispel the gloom which hung over her husband, son-in-law, and daughter, were unavailing. Ellen appeared even more dispirited than the others, and I saw that it was with an effort that she could restrain her tears.

"There she is!" exclaimed Mr. Merritt, as a ring at the bell was followed by a light step in the entry. He rose from the table and hastily left the room; but returned with a disappointed look. It was Netta carrying her empty basket to the kitchen.

We could not bear to resume our seats at the table, for we had all risen with Mr. Merritt, and gathered round the fire. Laggingly and tediously the hours passed on, and still Evelyn came not. We had ceased to wonder aloud, and even to speak at all, and sat thought-

ful and dejected. At the lightest sound of feet upon the front steps, and at every ring of the bell, Mr. Merritt, who had now thrown aside all disguise and ceremony, flew to the door. But every time he returned, his look was sadder and more despairing.

Twilight was approaching, and the servants entered to spread the table for tea. Mr. Merritt rose and rapidly paced the room. Every few moments he convulsively passed his fingers through his hair, and then, as though by a great effort of self-control, thrust them into his pocket again. Suddenly he paused in his walk immediately in front of my chair. With his hair disordered, and standing out about his head, his face almost livid in its pallor, his lips quivering, and his eyes dilated, you can readily conceive that he was an object to excite terror.

"Shall I go and look for her?" whispered he in a hoarse and unnatural voice.

I could not trust my tongue to speak, and bowed an assent. He snatched up his hat and left the house, followed by Mr. Willard, who was anxious to assist in the search.

Mrs. Willard had left the room, and I was alone with Ellen. "Miss Katerine! dear Miss Katerine," said she, in an agitated tone, "tell me what you think—what can have become of Evelyn?"

"Indeed, Ellen, I do not know what to think."

"She looked so strangely this morning," continued Ellen; "I have long seen that she was unhappy—have not you? But I am sure that you have—and now, how could she do anything so wicked as—as to——"

"To do what, Ellen?"

"She said that her life was miserable; could she be so rash, so sinful, as to——to put an end to it?"

"Ellen! What a horrible thought!" I exclaimed. "Evelyn commit suicide! Our beautiful, joyous, worshipped Evelyn? The idea is too appalling! Impossible!"

"But where can she be? If any accident had occurred, we should have heard of it before now—where can she be?"

"Perhaps she will soon be here to quiet all our fears," I replied; "we must wait patiently and hopefully: there may be nothing alarming in her absence."

Mrs. Willard now re-entered the room; but she appeared to be perfectly overcome, and I found it difficult to inspire her with the hope which I forced myself to feel.

Another hour passed on—the clock was just striking seven, when we heard a night-key turning in the lock of the front door. Before we could leave our seats, Mr. Willard and his son-in-law burst into the room.

"She is found—is she not?" exclaimed Mr. Merritt.

Not one of us could bear to give the sorrowful answer to this question.

After one hurried glance around the apartment, he sank into a chair, and fixed his eyes upon the fire.

Mr. Willard took his seat beside Ellen, as though she alone could comfort him; but, alas! she had not strength even to make the effort.

A violent ring at the bell now aroused us: in an instant Mr. Merritt was at the door, and we heard voices in the entry.

"At last! at last!" ejaculated Mrs. Willard. "It is some news of Evelyn—I know that it is—I heard somebody speak her name!"

Although she uttered these words in a hopeful tone, she retained her seat—perhaps she was unable to leave it. Every eye was turned expectantly to the door, but none moved. The voices were still audible—our impatience was becoming intolerable, when the sound ceased, the door opened, and Mr. Merritt entered, accompanied by—Laura Hilson!

"Have you seen Evelyn?" was the simultaneous question.

"I cannot say that *I* have seen her," replied Laura emphatically, "but I know that she was seen this morning walking in Broadway with Colonel Damoreau."

"That can have little to do with her present disappearance, Miss Hilson," answered I reprovingly; "*I myself saw her meet* Colonel Damoreau, or some other

gentleman, just after her *agreeable* interview with you was at an end ; but she has been at home since then."

"Are any of her clothes missing?" asked Laura in a peculiar tone, and without noticing my observation.

Mr. Merritt turned to Mrs. Willard and said, in a severe and commanding voice, "Go and see!"

Mrs. Willard withdrew, but soon returned. "Everything is there, except her hat and shawl."

"The most dreadful certainty would be better than this horrible, this agonizing suspense!" said Ellen, addressing me in a whisper.

Laura overheard her words, and answered—"I disagree with you, Ellen: I think *any* doubt, *any* suspense, would be more tolerable than the terrible certainty which we now feel."

"What certainty, Miss Hilson?" replied I in a manner which was intended to awe Laura into silence, for I feared the effect of her malicious suggestions.

"The certainty that Evelyn has forsaken her home!" answered Laura resolutely, but in accents which betokened grief and sympathy.

"Forsaken her home?" repeated Mrs. Willard sharply. "Pray what do you mean, Miss Hilson?"

I dared not look at Mr. Merritt, but I heard him gasp for breath as he supported himself upon the back of my chair.

"I mean what I say, my dear Mrs. Willard," replied Laura. "My words are only susceptible of one interpretation. I mean that Evelyn has deliberately forsaken her home and her husband!"

I could control myself no longer, and addressing her with perhaps too much violence, said, "Laura Hilson! beware what you do. Remember that your evil machinations are known to me, and be sure that a holy power will frustrate them. Remember that I overheard your conversation with Evelyn this morning. You drove her to despair with your taunts, and vile accusations, and if she has committed any rash act, you only are responsible. She told you that she was innocent, you believed and knew it, and yet tried to persuade her

that in the sight of the world she was guilty, and that she could never retain her position in society—you did this to——”

“Pardon me, Miss Bolton,” said Laura, with flashing eyes, which contradicted the unnatural calmness of her voice. “I will not accuse you of speaking falsely—I will only say that your memory is treacherous, or that you heard so imperfectly as unavoidably to misconstrue my words. I feared that Evelyn was acting very imprudently, and out of pure love for her, I warned her to awaken from her dream while there was yet time. So far from asserting her innocence, she—you force me to speak plainly—confessed that her affections were irrevocably engaged, and refused to listen to me when I besought her to remember that she was a wife and a mother.”

“Miss Hilson——” I began, but she interrupted me.

“I have one word more to add, Miss Bolton, with your permission, for I have been induced to say too much not to say more. It is best for you, Mr. Merritt, for Evelyn’s father, mother, sister, to know the truth at once, for the longer you anticipate it the more it will shock you. I repeat that Evelyn has forsaken her husband and her home—and forsaken them for Colonel Damoreau!”

Mr. Merritt sat like one stupified—he neither moved, nor uttered a groan, nor shed a tear—the blow seemed to have prostrated his very reason.

Ellen threw her arms about Mr. Willard’s neck, exclaiming, “Father, do not believe it!” and then laying her head upon his shoulder, wept bitterly.

After the first momentary shock, Mrs. Willard, her face scarlet with rage, darted towards Laura, and shaking her rudely by the arm, shrieked out, “Viper! she loved you! and you have stung her and us, because we caressed you! Liar! You know that what you say is false—as false as it is insulting—as false as you yourself are!”

Then turning to Mr. Merritt, she added, “Walter, she

has not spoken the truth, do not credit her malicious falsehood!"

Laura maintained her apparent composure, and addressing Mrs. Willard, said, "I *have* spoken truly, as you will soon discover; but grief and excitement have made you unconscious of what you say or do, therefore I pardon you your injustice. You will perhaps sue for my pardon when you find that your unfortunate, I will not say *unworthy* daughter, is at this moment under the protection of Colonel Damoreau!"

Laura had scarcely spoken these words when a step behind us, and a slight cough evidently intended to attract our attention, caused every one present to turn towards the door. Imagine Laura's consternation and our surprise and joy on beholding — Colonel Damoreau himself standing smilingly before us!

Mr. Merritt sprang from his seat, and warmly shaking the Colonel's hand cried out, in a tone full of deep emotion, "God bless you, my dear fellow! Pardon me that I wronged you for a moment!"

We all, except Laura, gathered around the Colonel, overwhelming him with our irrepressible expressions of joy, and for a second Evelyn was forgotten.

Colonel Damoreau very naturally looked bewildered at our strange greeting, and asked what had occurred. To inform him of Evelyn's disappearance was not to account for our unusual manner towards himself on his first entrance; but he was so much astonished and engrossed by the sorrowful news, that he could not give a thought to any other subject.

"Great heaven! what can have become of her!" ejaculated the Colonel. "When was she last at home? I hope that nothing serious has occurred! Good heavens! where can she be?"

"If *you* do not know, Colonel," said Laura pointedly, "it cannot be supposed that we can imagine."

Mr. Merritt turned suddenly towards Laura with a rebuke upon his lips, but she whispered a few repentant or exculpatory words in his ear which prevented its utterance.

“Upon my honor it is the most singular circumstance, I feel quite alarmed!” said the Colonel. “Mr. Merritt had we not better employ ourself in searching for the body? It is useless for us to stand idly here—if any accident has happened, we shall learn it at the City Hospital. But first take a cup of tea; I see that everything is prepared; a good cup of Hyson will strengthen your nerves.”

“No, no, I need nothing,” replied Mr. Merritt hastily. “Let us go!”

“As you please,” answered Colonel Damoreau. “Ladies, we hope to return with some intelligence which will set your minds at ease. The accident may prove a very trivial one, do not therefore permit your imaginations to conjure up too many terrors. Good evening for the present.”

“I will accompany them—I cannot endure to stay here,” said Mr. Willard, following his son-in-law and the Colonel out of the room.

“My heart is lightened!” murmured Mrs. Willard, resuming her seat by the fire. “Now we shall soon receive some news.”

“It strikes me that the Colonel was remarkably composed, and did not even feign much astonishment!” These words were spoken by Laura as though to herself, for they were not addressed to anybody in particular.

Mrs. Willard only noticed them by an angry glance, and as I cared not to excite the serpent to shoot forth its venom, my indignation also was voiceless.

One—two—three—four hours the gentlemen were absent—it was near midnight when they returned. No questions were asked, and no words spoken. Their dejected countenances plainly told how fruitless had been their search.

“Miss Bolton, Miss Hilson,” whispered Colonel Damoreau, as though he was afraid that the sound of his voice would disturb the sorrow of the mourners—“it is nearly twelve o’clock: will you permit me to accompany you home?”

Laura instantly rose and sought her bonnet, I made a sign to the Colonel that I would remain. Laura bade every one of us, in turn, good night; but the Colonel merely bowed as he retired. His delicacy and thoughtful consideration raised him in my esteem.

I insisted upon Ellen's seeking her couch, for it was worse than useless for her to trifle with her health, and after no little persuasion, she reluctantly withdrew. Mr. Willard was prevailed upon by his wife to follow his daughter's example.

For a short period, Mr. Merritt and I were left together; Mrs. Willard was paying a visit to the nursery.

"Let us still hope!" said I, drawing my chair nearer to that of the wretched man.

"Miss Bolton! Miss Bolton!" he broke forth. "Oh! if I could but know that she was alive—it would be too much happiness! My poor Evelyn—I have not been kind enough to her—I was not always tender and gentle enough: was I? I reproach myself for a thousand things which I never thought of before. She was so bright and beautiful—so joyous, and sometimes I was sullen and careworn—I did not remember that I ought to forget my troubles beside her. But I loved her, you know how madly I loved her, Miss Bolton? I may confess it to you? You sympathize with me—you will not ridicule me for my infatuation?"

"I loved her too, Mr. Merritt," replied I, "loved her most tenderly. But who could help loving her?"

"True, true, she was so perfect, so surpassingly good and lovely; I did not dare to show how proud I was of her beauty and her brilliancy. And now to lose her—but that is not possible—I will not believe it!" He shuddered while he spoke, as if at some frightful idea, and after a few moments continued. "I could never have borne that! One only thing I could never have borne! Disgraced! Dishonored! I could not, would not have survived that! The world's scorn would have killed me. But it could not be—it is too horrible for reality—I have loved her too tenderly—she was too pure—it could never be!"

I echoed the word "never!" and in his joyful gratitude he almost embraced me.

Our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Willard. We could not make up our minds to seek rest that night, and still clung to the hope that we should receive some intelligence of the lost one before morning.

The fire was replenished by Mr. Merritt, and we drew our chairs closer to the hearth, for the cold was becoming intense. Mr. Merritt soon sank into his former state of despairing dejection; and Mrs. Willard, after interchanging a few words with me, laid back in her chair with her eyes fixed on vacancy, but her features working from suppressed emotion. A servant entered, but I motioned him to retire, and we remained undisturbed. Through that long, long night, we sat sleepless, speechless, almost motionless; but even when the lamps flickered, and slowly expired, the fire died out, and the dull, cold morning light began to streak through the half-closed shutters, not even then were we quite hopeless. As the grey dawn faintly lighted the apartment, I observed that Mr. Merritt's eyes were closed, and I prayed that he might sleep. As I scanned his features, I thought that he had grown old in a single night. His brow was knit and deeply furrowed, his whole face was unnaturally white, even his lips were colorless, and a dark streak, which I had never before remarked, was visible beneath his closed eyes.

I looked towards Mrs. Willard—she also was gazing at her son-in-law, and as her eye encountered mine, a deep groan burst from her lips. We neither of us ventured to speak for fear of breaking Mr. Merritt's slumber. Before long the noisy feet of servants descending the stairs awoke him. He started, opened his eyes, and cried "Evelyn! How long has she been here? When did she come? Where was she?"

He looked confusedly about him, in search of the lovely being whom he believed to be near—and only encountered Mrs. Willard's sorrowful looks and mine.

"Have you heard nothing then?"

"Nothing!" was our mournful answer.

"It is morning! I will seek for her again!" said he rising. "I shall find her—it seemed to me that I saw her only a moment ago!"

He left the room, and I, remembering that Blanche would be alarmed at my absence, prepared to return home. Mrs. Willard entreated me not to leave her, but I was forced to tear myself away, promising to return as soon as possible.

On my way homeward the fresh morning air reinvigorated me, and in spite of my sleepless vigils, I felt no fatigue. When I reached Fleecer's, the servant that unlocked the door to admit me, stared, and gave utterance to an expression of surprise as I passed by him; but I did not pause to notice his remark!

Blanche had not retired to her own bed, but was lying on the rug, before the fire, in my chamber, for I suppose that there was a fire in the grate when she laid down, although it was not entirely extinguished. She was quietly slumbering, and I threw myself upon my own bed without arousing her. I could not sleep, and after resting my limbs for about an hour, I rose. My steps were so far from noiseless, as I moved about the room, that Blanche awoke. She showed no surprise on beholding me; and, as she never by any accident ventures to ask questions, I cannot tell whether or not she is aware of my absence during the night.

I did not make my appearance at the breakfast table, because I dreaded to meet Laura Hilson.

At noon I shall see the Willard's again; I had almost written *I shall see Evelyn!* Would that I might behold her!

CHAPTER II.

“ Yet there are pangs of keener woe,
 Of which the sufferers never speak,
 Nor to the world's cold pity show
 The tears that scald the cheek,
 Wrung from their eyelids by the shame
 And guilt of those they shrink to name;
 Whom once they loved with cheerful will,
 And love, though fallen and branded, still !”

BEYANT.

From the Same to the Same.

November 2d.

FIVE days of anxious sorrow have dragged on with expectation's snail-like pace, but brought no news of Evelyn. Heavy hearts, to which every passing hour adds weight, gather round her deserted hearth; and the eyes that brightened at her ready jest and spirited repartee, only lift their swollen lids to gaze on her vacant seat, or turn sorrowfully to one another.

The grief which overflows in words may look for and receive consolation; but Mr. Merritt's carefully masked, yet intense anguish, silences the soothing voice of sympathy. On the first night of Evelyn's absence, when he was alone with me, his feelings found a transient vent, but since that hour he has relapsed into his usual apparently cold and formal state. He disregards none of the little ceremonious observances to which he is accustomed to attend, he gives way to no bursts of sorrow, he never even mentions the name of his wife. But I remarked this morning that his hairs had rapidly whitened—his knitted brow never for a moment unbends, his form has become emaciated, and his sharp cheek-bones

look as though they would pierce their thin and hueless covering.

He would willingly hide himself from the inquisitive world, whose sentence he has ever held in awe, but his commercial occupations and responsibilities will not permit the concealment. Almost at every step he encounters some friend who inquires whether any intelligence has yet been received of Mrs. Merritt, and his struggle to veil his feelings and meet the curious eyes about him, is consuming both body and spirit. He, who would have pledged wealth, luxury, and even comfort, to purchase for himself, and all that was his, popular approbation and reverence, now knows that his name is bandied upon every lip; and that calumny, pity, and contempt, have breathed it by turns. To a man of his temperament, can you conceive much greater misery?

The sight of his child, too, wholly unmans him; whenever its grandmother enters with the infant in her arms, he either hastily leaves the room, or motions her to take it away. The little cherub, young as it is, has its mother's delicately curved lip and flashing smile; and, oh! I can well imagine that these are too painful for him to behold.

Upon Mrs. Willard her recent affliction has had an equally marked and even more unpleasant effect than upon her son-in-law. She has thrown aside her habitual softness and wonted blandishments. Her sorrow vents itself in angry words and sharp rebukes to her inferiors and dependants, and in perpetual ebullitions of discontent. She is ever quarrelling with her fate. Her son-in-law is the only person whom she addresses with kindness. But though she is still as careful of his comforts, and as attentive in pleasing him, her efforts are wholly unacknowledged or unnoticed. Her attachment to me has, I think, strengthened, for she will scarcely permit me to leave her presence. She talks of Evelyn incessantly, but there is a spirit of selfishness and calculation even in her maternal grief which appears to be inherent in her nature. It evinced itself this morning, when she said to me; "Should Evelyn — if it were possible that

Evelyn had been killed by any accident, do you think Walter would marry again?"

This sounds heartless, does it not? but selfishness renders us worse than heartless.

Ellen and her father are less to be pitied than the other mourners, for their mutual misfortune has knit them more closely together, and in their perfect sympathy with each other they are cheated of half their suffering. It is the heart which sorrows in loneliness that is truly miserable: grief that is shared, is lightened. Ellen has now all her feelings under such perfect control, that she can bow meekly to the will of Heaven. She feels and knows it to be a sin to yield herself up to unremitting and all-absorbing sorrow, and patience and resignation are her loveliest characteristics. Her sister is ever in her thoughts, and often upon her lips, yet none of her duties are neglected — Netta, Billy, and their parents, still claim her attention; her visits to them are hardly less frequent, and her time scarcely less occupied. But she has not yet had courage to resume her pen, and continue her translation; she probably fears that in the quietude of her own chamber her thoughts may wander whither they should not.

Colonel Damoreau daily pays the Willards a short visit, but he is too thoughtful, has too much tact and delicacy, ever to mention the absent one. Can it be, that in my first impression of this man, I have wronged him? Have I mistaken ordinary gallantry for deeper emotion, when I mistrusted his attentions to Evelyn? Had he really been enamoured, would his present mournful and subdued look, which he seemed merely to assume out of respect for us, be the only evidence of his sorrow? True, he is too completely a man of the world to display his heart; but had she actually been an object of intense interest to him, her loss would have left some deeper trace of affliction than that which his countenance now wears.

Amy Elwell, too, is a constant visitor. She has a way of her own, and a very peculiar one, of making herself useful to Mrs. Willard and Ellen; and they find

something consolatory in her gentle presence. Since her return from the South, she has not been as intimate with Evelyn as formerly, both because Evelyn seemed to prefer the society of Laura, and because Amy herself was engrossed by Blanche; but the interior affection of the two early friends was unabated.

I fancy that I have found the clue to Amy's melancholy, if indeed her resigned sorrow deserves that name. Yesterday, while Amy and I were sitting in the drawing-room at Mr. Merritt's, awaiting Ellen's return from her walk, Colonel Damoreau was announced. Amy had not seen him since her visit to the South. She started— involuntarily rose, but sat down again; her breath quickened, her color came and went, she half-stretched out her hand, then drew it away, and sank back in her seat. I watched her in astonishment, for the expression of her countenance reminded me of her look when she appeared in the tableaux as Medora.

Colonel Damoreau is too well bred to *seem* to notice her agitation, but it could hardly have escaped his quick eyes. He expressed great pleasure at the renewal of his acquaintance, and requested to be ranked amongst the friends who were permitted to visit her.

She quickly recovered her self-possession, but conversed with unusual reserve. When the Colonel bade us good morning, she followed my example in extending him her hand, and she has been more cheerful than I have seen her since our return.

I have omitted to mention that Laura Hilson, in spite of the severe and bitter rebukes which she has received from Mrs. Willard, has not, by any means, dropped the acquaintance. She selects those hours at which she is certain of finding Mr. Merritt at home, for her visits; and I never gave her credit for such powers of fascination as she has evinced in her efforts to console and divert him. To Evelyn she no longer ventures to allude, but her manner implies that the absent wife is unworthy of a thought.

I was not present when Richard first heard of his sister's disappearance, but his mother assures me that he

swore he would find her, dead or alive; and maintained that she loved *him* too well to disgrace him by any imprudent act. Mrs. Willard has great hopes that his search will be effectual, and since we have nothing but hope to sustain us, we cannot dispense with its reviving presence, but hourly "hope against hope."

CHAPTER III.

"Whence this air
Of mystery? That face was wont to open
Clear as the morning sun, showing all things."
ZAROLYA.

From Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

New York, November 2d.

UP to this hour, dear Fred, I have worn the window which Momus suggested in my breast, that my heart might be subject to your friendly inspection. And now, if Prudence closes the shutters, you must cry "so be it," and discreetly turn away your eyes. There *are* subjects, ~~some~~ some few subjects, upon which it is dangerous to be too communicative. You are acquainted with my olden fondness for quotations? A snug corner of my head contains a huge scrap-book of literary bijoux, and I will now indulge you with a glance at one expressive leaf for the benefit of your curiosity. If you find the passage unsolvably enigmatical, you will never be hung for the keenness of your perception. Give ear to the quotation! I think it is Petruccio, though it may be somebody else, says,

"And happily I have arrived at last
Unto the wished haven of my bliss."

I am not precisely a Petruccio, but I have a summum bonum, and *if* I have not reached it—why I never shall.

Could you take an Asmodeus peep into my bachelor establishment, your novelty-loving eyes would be well feasted. We have been new-modelled and re-robed. Every article of furniture has been selected with the taste and care which you would expend upon the tie of a neck-cloth.

The clock on my mantel represents Cupid and Psyche sportively bearing away Time upon their shoulders. Time, with upraised arms, holds aloft the globe, and upon its surface the hours are marked.

If you took your peep in the evening, you would find the apartment illuminated by the three Graces, who, within their separate niches, hold aloft their golden chain, from which a moonlight lamp is suspended. One whole side of the apartment is lined with mirrors which reflect every movement, and warn you to imitate the sister Goddesses in grace of motion and attitude.

Over the mantel hangs one splendid painting which was executed under my especial superintendence. It represents Gulnare kneeling at Conrad's feet; and the artist has so perfectly caught the spirit of my description, that the face of Gulnare bears no slight resemblance to Evelyn; and in the Corsair you would quickly recognise your humble servant.

Then my curtains, Fred, the richest pale pink satin, lined with white embroidered lace, and the ornaments, a golden bow with an arrow piercing a lyre—the lyre forms the centre piece. The draperies are looped back by the links of a golden chain, from which is suspended a well-filled quiver!

Between the windows, instead of the stiff American-looking *console* (or pier table), stands a beautifully carved rose-wood table, supported upon Griffin feet, and covered with an innumerable variety of French bijouterie. Full twenty or thirty elegant trifles, such as richly cut flasks of delicate perfumes—a golden pine-apple wreathed with jewelled flowers, which opens with a spring and discloses all the apparatus of a lady's work-box—a vine of gold laden with coral flowers, creeping over a silver

trellis, and embedding a couple of enamelled shells to hold rings—an enchanted bird, who warbles his songs at the mere effort of your will, aided by an unperceived touch of the thumb. But in the centre of all these nick-nackeries—I really must describe to you the centre ornament—a most exquisite piece of porcelain—a shrine for floral offerings. You shall tell me whether or not the device is an ingenious one.

A beautiful Sultana reclines upon a bank of moss; and beside her stands a small vase which she is in the act of filling. The vase contains water, and I save the Sultana the trouble and adorn it myself every morning with fresh “forget-me-nots.”

The couch of the Oriental fair one is hollow and perforated with apertures on the further side; these apertures, when filled with white roses and myrtle branches, form a natural bower over the eastern lady’s head exceedingly beautiful to behold. The bower is daily renewed; but white roses only are used—for what reason I leave your ingenuity to discover. The windows of my *salon*, which are composed of glass folding-doors, open upon a tasteful conservatory crowded with rare exotics. But my description must come to an end, or my letter, like the doors I have just mentioned, will never close.

“What is the meaning of all this lavish expenditure—these silken couches, mirrors and flowers?” you will demand.

My only answer is, that I have taken a sudden fancy to transform my abode into an Alhambra, and that I am not responsible for my whim. I am amused and time flies—*en faut il davantage?*

“I am monarch of all I survey,” and I survey some peerless creations of Nature, over which it is worth while reigning King—rest assured of that, Fred.

I was surprised at the account which you gave me of Claudine. So, for the trouble of your journey to Charleston, you gained nothing but your pains? Are you sure that she has left the city? And the cottage remains deserted and without a claimant? What a thorough little idiot the girl has proved herself! She might have been

as well off as others, and have led a tolerably pleasant sort of life, if she had chosen the part of wisdom. Between you and I, Fred, I don't at all relish the idea of her having taken a journey to the North, for should she travel by land, when she arrives at Washington she could easily trace me here. But there is no use of anticipating unlikely difficulties; it is more than probable that in a fit of ungovernable passion she has destroyed herself. Poor little fool! She is worth a sigh, for a merrier little wench never turned a man's head; she used to sing like a nightingale, and her black eyes were the most beautiful *dark* ones that I ever beheld. But my passion, that is, *my present passion*, is for orbs of blue. Your blue-eyed nymphs are more tender, and not so much given to volcanic bursts of fury and to melo-dramatic ideas of revenge.

Should you chance to hear of Claudine, apprise me without delay. She used to say that I was the first man she had ever loved, and I almost believe her. But she always added that I was the last whom she ever could love, but *that* I never credited, and hope, if she is yet above ground, to convince her of her error.

You shall hear from me soon, but my letters may not be very explicit just at present; but doubtless your quick perception will furnish you with a key to the darker portions. Addios. "Never say *fail*," is the sage Richelieu's counsel, and that of

Your warm friend,

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

CHAPTER IV.

“And for such goodness can I return nothing
 But some hot tears that sting mine eyes? Some sighs
 That if not breathed, would swell my heart to stifling?”

COLERIDGE.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

November 7th.

“THIS world is full of trouble!” cry the world’s systematic malcontents, and “Amen” respond both young and old. Yet there is something ungrateful in the reflection, and unwise in the admission. Full of trouble it may be, but it is replete with joy also: joy for which the keenness of our zest would be deadened save for the contrast of affliction. And may it not be that those very afflictions are hidden blessings, purifying and perfecting our nature? May they not give fresh impulse to the current of our lives, which would become stagnant but for this “troubling of the waters?”

It was not, as you will naturally imagine, the misfortunes of my friends in Union Place which drew from me this reflection. I was thinking of the unhappy Blanche. Her health is partially restored, but she is still feeble, her energies are paralyzed, and she broods over her wretched fate in silent sadness of spirit. When I converse with her and strive to elevate her thoughts, and to awaken a sense of the Providential care of Him who orders all things, she looks at me with vacant eyes which gradually fill with tears; her head sinks upon her bosom, and she makes no reply to my words. Although I cannot rouse her from her apathetic state, she obeys my *simplest requests with the affectionate submission of a child*

Yet there is no meekness in her humility; her lovely face wears no look of resignation, its expression is still uncalm and joyless.

She alarmed me yesterday by an unwonted burst of passion. Within the last few days she has frequently requested my permission to walk out. Watching her from the window, I observe that she hurries through the street, closely veiled, and gazing into the face of every person whom she meets, as though she was seeking some familiar countenance. Yesterday she remained absent an unusual length of time. I was sitting in my chamber, quietly reading, when she ran into the room with her hat falling back upon her shoulders, her hair dishevelled, and her dress disordered. Sinking at my feet, she exclaimed: "I have seen him! Thank God! I have found him!"

"Whom have you seen, Blanche?" inquired I.

"My father's murderer! He is here—I have found him!"

For some minutes she remained with her face buried in her hands—her slight form quivering with agitation—then gradually raising her head, she gazed with the most piteous expression on my face, and said: "Look at me! What am I now? And two short years ago—so gay—so innocent—so recklessly happy! My father and I—we were all the world to each other—I was his only child, and I had no mother. Such pleasant hours—such happy days—who destroyed them? Who poisoned my mind and crushed every noble impulse in my heart—seized upon a transient moment of weakness to gain his own evil ends, and made me what I am—an object for scorn and hatred—the murderer of my own father? My poor old father! I was blind—mad—spell-bound by a demon, or I could never have left him!"

I spoke to her, but she did not notice my remark, and continued, without addressing her words to me: "How he looked at me just before his eyes closed for the last time! So piteously, so reproachfully, but oh! so lovingly! And then he frowned, a painful frown—and then—oh! then he smiled! He only gasped once, gasped

very gently, but I knew—no, no, I did not know, I could not believe that he would never smile, never even gasp again! His hand grew cold, so cold, and so stiff, and his forehead was like marble, but I kissed it, and tried to warm him—and I put my arms about him, for my blood was on fire—but he was too icy—I saw that I had killed him! Yet he spoke after he was dead! Did you know that the dead could speak? He cried out to me in a low, deep voice, that made all my veins creep, and he told me to pursue his murderer! I have pursued him—I have found him—I saw him to-day—I stole behind him—I whispered a word in his ear, and he—started and grew as white as my father in his shroud. ‘Keep thy oath—keep thy oath,’ my dead father’s voice shrieked out again. Father, I will keep it!”

I was shocked and terrified; for it was more than possible that Blanche, in her half-deranged state of mind, might seek a fearful revenge upon her betrayer. But my horror was not alone awakened, let me confess it, by the crime she would commit—for, that betrayer was—I cannot name him; I would fain disbelieve that of which I am too certain.

Since I could not at that moment, and during her excitement, convince her of the sinfulness of her projected revenge, I thought that I might influence her by appealing to her sense of gratitude towards myself.

“Listen to me, Blanche,” said I. “I have been a friend to you when you had no friends. I have done what I could for you, have I not? You owe me some gratitude?”

“Much—oh, how much!”

“You will then listen to me, and if I ask it, repay me?”

“I have nothing to give you but tearful thanks, and the thanks of a broken heart cannot reward you!”

“If, Blanche—if the one who has injured you so deeply should prove to be a friend—a brother—one very dear to me—if my heart would break should any evil reach him, would not gratitude banish your dreams of revenge?”

“ But he can be nothing to you ? ”

“ Suppose that I could prove to you that he was ? ”

Without answering me, she started up (for she had been crouching at my feet), and raising her finger, and bending her head with the action of one who listens, she whispered, “ Hush ! hush ! ” Her dark eyes flashed with a wild light, every limb quivered, and her miniature form seemed to gain height and majesty. “ My father’s voice ! ” she cried. “ Thy oath ! keep thy oath— it was vowed beside my coffin : I heard it in my shroud. Father, I will keep it, though every angel in Heaven should cry out ‘ thou shalt not ! ’ ”

As she uttered these last words, she sank upon her knees, with one arm uplifted, as though she was renewing the vow already too solemnly breathed.

I tried to console myself with the belief that as these moments of excitement and hallucination passed away, the horrible intentions which she then entertained would vanish with them. I also determined to watch her closely, that she might find no opportunity to execute her maniac purpose.

The violence of her agitation had completely exhausted her ; I took her hand and raised her from her knees, for she was too feeble to regain her feet without my assistance.

I thought it dangerous to risk the renewal of her emotion by any further conversation, and induced her to seek repose. She held my hand tightly within her own as I seated myself beside her couch, and once or twice, as she kissed it with fervour, it was moistened with her scalding tears. I did not leave her until she slept, or seemed to sleep—and then I sent for Amy, to consult with her, and communicate what had transpired.

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RESEARCH NOTE

A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS
Perla (Perla) *perla*
The new species is described
as follows: Body length 1.5
mm. Head brown, with
black markings. Thorax
dark brown. Wings
with a broad, dark
marginal band. Abdomen
black with a broad
white lateral band.
Male genitalia as in
figure 1. Female genitalia
as in figure 2.

Material examined.—
Holotype male, collected
at [location], [date].
Paratype female, collected
at [location], [date].
Other specimens: [location],
[date].

Dr. [Name]
pers. coll. [location].
X.
since [location].
[location].

Last night we were sitting beside the cradle, watching the suffering babe as it tossed about its snowy little arms in an unquiet slumber. Ellen had stolen into the room to take one look at the beloved child, and then retired to her couch. Soon after, Mr. Merritt entered. For some minutes he stood silently, with folded arms and rigid features, at the cradle's head, then suddenly stooped, touched the infant's fevered lips with his own scarcely less burning ones, and before we could address him he had left the room. As the child moved on its pillow, I saw, by the imperfect light of the *veilleuse*, something glittering upon its soft cheek—it was a tear—a tear shed from an eye most unused to the melting mood—its father's tear! Mrs. Willard saw the bright drop at the instant it caught my eye; and as she gently wiped it away, her own rolled in its place.

It was past midnight, and we were now the only watchers—the only mourners that courted not slumber. For some time we conversed together in a low tone, while Mrs. Willard at short intervals gently rocked the cradle with her foot. A sound, as though of a hand trying to force open the outside shutter, startled us!

Mrs. Willard caught hold of my arm, and whispered, "What is that?" We remained silent for some minutes, but the noise was not repeated.

We had just concluded that our fears had been aroused by the wind shaking the shutter, and had recommenced our whispered conversation, when we were again disturbed. The tread of stealthy steps in the court-yard could be distinctly heard. Again we listened in profound silence, the footsteps were no longer audible; but a sob—a low, stifled, groan-like sob, struck upon our ears!

"Who can that be?" said Mrs. Willard, approaching her terrified face to mine.

I could only echo her own question in answer.

"Kate! I thought I heard the sound again! You are so much braver than I am—do go and see!"

I proceeded to comply with her request, and left the

room tremulous, not from fear, but with agitation. I groped my way along the entry, for the faint light which glimmered from the open chamber door hardly assisted me. With some difficulty I found the bolt of the door that led into the court-yard, and noiselessly drew it back. My hands shook so violently that I could scarcely turn the knob—but it was turned at length—the door unclosed, and I thrust out my head. I looked about me, but at first saw nothing in the darkness—just as I was about to re-close the door, I caught a glimpse of a female figure hastily retreating through the open gate of the court-yard. I sprang up the steps to gain a nearer view, and perhaps follow it, but the form had disappeared. I only beheld the watchman stalking past the door, and I began to fancy that my active and excited imagination had converted his stalwart frame into that of a woman.

I returned to Mrs. Willard, but could give no satisfactory answer to her anxious questions. We passed the rest of the night in watching and listening for the return of the steps, but they were not again audible.

Towards morning, the infant slept more quietly, and a gentle perspiration bedewed its tender little limbs. This was a favorable sign, and the only one which has permitted me for a moment to share Mrs. Willard's hopes.

* * * * *

December 25th.

Last Christmas eve glad music resounded through the house which was Evelyn's home—merry voices and ringing laughter burst upon the entranced ear—living tableaux feasted the delighted eye—Evelyn, in the morning splendor of her unsullied beauty, was the Queen of the fête; and Walter, with a joyous and worshipping heart, bowed before his idol! Another Christmas eve has come—the voice of merriment and the laugh of gaiety are changed to the subdued tone of despair, and the wild sob of anguish—in that very apartment, where those living tableaux greeted our enchanted sight, a lifeless, but not less lovely picture, transfixes our eyes—Evelyn's star is set, and Walter's heavy heart may never again know a joyous pulse.

And what picture has taken the place of those gorgeous tableaux? An impressive and warning one—though every day displayed to human sight. One of those richly carved chairs upon which Evelyn so often has sat with her infant smiling in her arms, now supports a miniature coffin. The coffin is lined with spotlessly white drapery, and from amidst its folds the scarcely less snowy face of Lilla shows forth. The lily is culled and the stem broken!

An angelic smile—the parting smile of the blissful spirit as it bids farewell to earth, is indelibly stamped upon the infant's beautiful lips. Its marble brow is wreathed with a chaplet of the white sweet alysum, and the chiselled hands folded upon that spotless bosom, contain a sprig of the same aromatic flower. Those flowers were culled, and that garland woven by Ellen's hand; I knew it as soon as I saw the wreath, for I remember well the capacious green box in her chamber-window, where her favorite sweet alysum is ever in bloom.

Yesterday morning our little Lilla obviously revived—her fever left her, she recognized Mrs. Willard, once or twice smiled in her face, and while in her father's arms, feebly lifted up her tiny hand to pat his cheek.

"She will recover!" exclaimed Mrs. Willard, hopefully. "She is almost well."

"Heaven grant it!" said Mr. Merritt, pressing the now doubly dear infant to his heart.

An hour afterwards the child's former languor returned, she grew faint, and was restored by a potion which Dr. R. had left. The faintness recurred at short intervals, and Mrs. Willard became alarmed and sent for her physician. Long before the messenger could reach his residence, the child had expired on its grand-mother's lap. But so gently was its last sigh heaved, so softly did the angels free the pure spirit committed to their guardianship, that Mrs. Willard thought the babe still breathed. She could not believe that the jewel had been borne away, and that she held but the empty, and now worthless casket in her arms.

When the infant's cold and stiffening limbs at last con-



iced her of the fatal truth, she grew frantic with grief. She lifted up the child, shook it gently to produce some motion of its members—wildly chafed its hands, feet, and temples, and forced the restorative medicine it had before taken into its tiny mouth. The cordial flowed from its lips again, and no sign of life was visible. Then Mrs. Willard started up, and in the most impious and terrific manner upbraided heaven for having robbed her of her sole remaining treasure. I would not shock your ears by repeating the terrible words she used. Fortunately, at this crisis, Dr. R. entered. Lilla was taken from the arms of Mrs. Willard, who was carried out of the room in a violent fit of hysteria.

As soon as Dr. R. pronounced that every effort to restore the child was useless, I sought Mr. Merrit; for I had heard him entering the house a few moments after the physician. I feared that the mournful news might be communicated to him too abruptly. At one glance he must have discovered all that I came to tell, for he averted his face as he convulsively clasped my hand; and when his countenance was again turned towards me, I saw that he had bitten his quivering lip until the trace of blood was visible.

“We must bravely bear our trials,” said I in a soothing voice, “or we cannot disarm them of their poignancy.”

“I cannot be more wretched than I am!” was his heart-rending reply.

He evidently desired to be alone, that he might give vent to the grief which pride repressed, and I left him to seek Ellen.

I found her by Mrs. Willard's bed, weeping herself, while she was trying to console, or pacify, her frenzied mother. I remained with her, and aided her in the performance of her duties for some hours. But my sympathy for Mrs. Willard received a severe shock, when I remarked that in the midst of her lamentations, her most frequent ejaculation was, “What will become of us now? What will become of us!”

Selfishness was still predominant.

And yet, though in a different manner, is not all grief for the dead selfish? Especially grief for a departed infant? True, the mother's heart is rent as she yields up her child—the dearest portion of herself. But to whom does she yield it? To God, and to the care of celestial angels, who tenderly receive the infant spirit—lovingly instruct it, by infusing holy ideas into its infantile mind—and gradually initiate it into the knowledge of goodness and truth, and into the heavenly delights which proceed from that knowledge—until the spirit reaches its maturity and becomes an angel. The hereditary evil propensities, which are necessarily transmitted to it by its parents, have never been appropriated, and therefore form no barrier to the reception of that ineffable happiness which springs from goodness alone. It moves in an atmosphere redolent of love, and every cord of its sinless heart is attuned to joy. Could a breast wholly unselfish be found upon this earth, would it not meekly, and smilingly, resign Heaven's dearest gift—a perfect child—when that child was summoned by its Creator to this holy nurturing?

As I gazed upon the marble-like and lifeless form that had once enshrouded Lilla's pure spirit, a vision of a paradisaical garden, with its arched walks formed of laurel espaliers, floated before my eyes. And I saw a train of seraphic infants, with their radiant brows, and white bosoms, and tender arms garlanded with flowers of the most resplendent hues. And when, with their graceful arms lovingly entwined about one another, they entered the garden, the beds of flowers seemed to express their joy by increasing splendor, and the perfume-laden air wafted its most aromatic odours about the happy spirits. And then I thought I saw two angels, more beautiful than words can express, and clad in robes of lustrous white, accompanying the innocent throng. And while the children gambolled about them they insinuated something holy into all their sports, something representative of celestial goodness combined with angelic truth.

The vision faded: I found myself gazing upon Lilla's corpse, and I inwardly rejoiced that her spirit was with

the angels, and sighed not on remembering that that soulless clay would soon be mouldering in the earth.

In New York it is a very general custom to place the coffin, which holds the corpse of the deceased, in an open apartment, that the friends of the family, and even strangers, may visit and take their last adieu of the remains. This afternoon, a couple of hours before the funeral, Ellen and I were standing at the foot of the coffin, once again contemplating the beautiful statue within, when a lady, dressed in widow's mourning, glided into the room. The sweeping black veil that almost enveloped her whole form was gathered in such thick folds over her face that we could not distinguish a single feature. As she neither noticed nor saluted us, we concluded that she was a stranger.

She hurried towards the coffin, then paused, and with her hands pressed tightly upon her heart, she stood for a long time immoveably gazing upon the infant. Her attitude was one of despairing, speechless, woe. My pulses throbbed tumultuously at the presence of this strange being, and my emotion was reciprocated by Ellen. Suddenly the lady sank upon her knees, and lifting her pall-like veil, in a manner which permitted it to enshroud the coffin without exhibiting her face, she pressed her lips in one long, agonizing kiss upon those of the corpse. Slowly then she rose, with her eyes still intently fixed upon the child, and, turning away, departed.

Ellen followed the retreating figure with her eyes, and then looked bewilderedly at me as though she hardly dared to give utterance to her thoughts. At last she said, "That beautiful figure—her air—her step—do not they remind you of somebody?"

I could only answer by an involuntary sigh.

"She was thinner, much thinner than——" Ellen interrupted herself and remained lost in thought.

Once more she addressed me and said, "Who could she be?"

"Some bereaved mother perhaps," replied I, "whose grief the sight of Lilla may have renewed."

"Her gait and her form seemed very familiar to me,"

continued Ellen, "you do not know what strange thoughts shot through my mind while she was kissing the child!"

"And through mine, too, Ellen; yet we are probably both of us mistaken; deluded by our own hopes."

Here our conversation ended. Mr. Merritt soon after entered the room, and we both of us stole away that he might remain unobserved.

I did not see Mr. Merritt again until I beheld him leaning upon his father-in-law's arm, and heading the long procession which followed the infant to its grave. To describe to you Mr. Merritt's prostration of spirit, his heart-piercing woe, would be impossible. I am now more than ever convinced that it is not the most excitable and impetuous temperament which feels most deeply. Passions, the warmest and most ardent, slumber within the secret recesses of many an apparently cold heart, even as the hidden fire within the bosom of the ice-crowned volcano.

Mrs. Willard has been subject, for the last two days, to continual fits of hysterics, but this evening I think the violence of the attacks is abating.

The whole charge of the household now devolves on Ellen; and she displays calmness, judgment, and energy of character that astonish me. It is no poetical fiction that the fragrant flower, when crushed, gives forth a sweeter perfume; and there are human flowers whose incense is most odorous when Sorrow's harsh hand weighs down their bright blossoms.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Oh! how this spring of love resembleth
 The uncertain glory of an April day,
 Which now shows all her beauty to the sun,
 And by and by a cloud bears all away!”

From Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

December 28th.

By all that is execrable! dear Fred, I do pronounce myself the most unlucky, the most pestered, the most miserable dog that walks at large about this mundane sphere. I made up my mind upon this point as I was stirring a tolerably strong cup of coffee this morning and hoping that it might rid me at once of headache and dejection—for I have fallen into the last stage of *ennui*! Here I sit with all the attributes of wealth around me; like a bird without its mate, (its last one,) pining in a golden cage—and wishing myself to the D—l or anywhere but where I am. But perhaps I make a mistake in desiring any nearer proximity to his Satanic Majesty than I now enjoy; since if his presence can create an infernal region out of a seeming paradise, he is certainly my guest.

Fred, I have made up my mind that the preachers have the best of the argument, and “all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” I shall turn saint! To have been outwitted, mocked—made a fool of at my years—for I am a veteran in the pursuit of pleasure, and in the knowledge of womanhood—is it not enough to kindle the ire of all the Jobs in the Old Testament?

But I am too important an individual for trouble to

visit me single-handed: one might suppose that the Hydra-headed monster intended to overwhelm me with horrors until I grew penitent, confessed my peccadilloes, and cried out for quarter. I have half a mind to hang myself out of very desperation and disgust for life, and for the sake of getting rid of myself. It would be a capital end all.

Shall I transmit you a curtailed catalogue of my grievances?

Item 1st to Disaster 1st. The doors of the odour-breathing conservatory are now always closed—it is many days since the bower of the porcelain Sultana has been reconstructed with fresh flowers, and the "forget-me-nots" in her vase are all withered.

Item 2d. The painting on the wall representing Conrad and Gulnare has grown odious to me—the very sight of it provokes me to anger, not unmingled with some sorrow. These two items necessarily follow in the train of an unlooked for calamity, which I shall not name.

Disaster 2d. Whom do you suppose I met the other day just as I was descending the steps of the Astor House? Whom but Claudine herself? I knew that I should stumble upon her some day or other; I have long felt that that girl was my evil genius, and my forebodings may not be groundless. How she found her way here, Heaven only knows; one might be tempted to believe that she was guided by Fate. You see I am fast becoming a *predestinarian*—what shall I be next? Well, to proceed—I encountered Claudine, that is to say, she encountered me, for she was veiled and I did not at first recognize her. And yet it was a wonder that I could have forgotten her fairy-like, Fenella figure! My dormant memory was quickened by the sound of her voice, for she walked close beside me, whispered "Claudine!" in my ear, lifted her veil for a second, and disappeared. I was shocked to find her so much altered, though of course it is her own fault. There was no use of her grieving away her beauty, for really she was pretty enough to be wiser. What fools these women are! I

have a strong inclination to forswear them—but the fit will not last.

Disaster 3d caps the climax. Three days after my rencontre with the little Zantippe, I received the intelligence that Messrs. J. & L., important bankers, who held in their hands two thirds of my property, had failed; and I consequently find myself minus some sixty thousand dollars. The income of the remaining thirty will not by any means support me as a gentleman *should* live, and as I *must* live. What is to be done? I cannot afford to pocket my loss, and the evil will not remedy itself. I have two projects on foot: if one fails, huzza! for the other! The second is quite "in my line," as the merchants say, for I never met with a decided rebuff yet where a woman was concerned.

My first project will create for me that engrossing excitement which I need as a tonic for my debilitated mental system. I purpose making a bold dash and investing at least half of all that I am worth in Canton and Erie rail-road stock. Success is for the venturesome, and Wall street is the El Dorado of the reckless fortune-seeker. It is a fashionable and licensed gaming table, at which men do not lose their reputation by betting high, and where fortunes grow like Jack the Giant Killer's bean-stalk. I am certain of winning, but even should I lose every copper, I shall think my money well expended if it purchase me a pleasurable excitement.

If I am unsuccessful I shall console myself with my second project, which will prove a much safer though less tempting speculation. To explain to you my intentions and hopes, I must go back in my history to the evening upon which I personated Conrad. Medora was represented by a fair young girl whom I have reasons to think would entertain no especial scruples to being in reality the Corsair's Bride. She is one of those mild, meek creatures who are half afraid of their own thoughts, and yet never harbour an idea which might not be written in the Journal of a Saint. In point of beauty she cannot compare with Evelyn, nor indeed with Claudine, but she has a pale, expressive face, gentle, blue eyes, a

slender, lady-like figure, much natural grace, and very silken, sunny hair, which is always beautifully, and I may say poetically arranged—and you will remember that I am particularly fastidious about a woman's mode of dressing her hair.

These attributes would be by no means sufficient to qualify her to enact the part of Conrad's wife in real life; but she has other more important recommendations. She is an only child and an heiress! I warrant that you are already alarmed at the idea of my committing matrimony; but consider my necessities, Fred.

As a matter of course you will not doubt my power of winning the young lady's affections? Fortunately for me, as I am not in the vein to take much trouble, they are already more than half won. The hue of a fair one's cheek as you address her, is an admirable barometer proclaiming the state of her heart; and Amy's cheek has betrayed some of her heart's tenderest secrets. Pity me, Fred, for I must be in a sad plight to even contemplate entangling myself in the bonds of matrimony. Luckily I have a faculty of rendering all bonds light.

I am so consumedly dull just at this moment that I will shorten my letter, and inflict no more of my stupidity upon you. I am half inclined to adopt my friend Richard's opinion, and believe that I am "hipped." By the way, I am getting tired of this same Richard's eternal boring. The baboon's tricks no longer amuse me, and I shall order the door to be closed in his inquisitive face some day or other.

Very dolefully yours,

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

CHAPTER VII.

“ We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not;
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.”

SHELLEY.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

January 31, 18—.

I AM sad to-day—in one of those spiritless moods which disable us from exertion. Through the whole morning I have been endeavouring to struggle against a feeling of causeless discontent. I have long been convinced of the folly, ingratitude, and positive sinfulness of giving way to such emotions—yet how difficult is it to conquer them? I have busied myself in various ways, but the evil spirit still possesses me. As a last means, and I trust an effectual one, of exercising it, I have seized upon a couple of large sheets of letter-paper, caught up my pen, and seated myself in the dear old arm chair, dedicated to revery, scribbling, and to thoughts of you. The spot where it stands should be consecrated ground; the spirit of discontent shall not reach me here. Now let me examine my heart, to discover what chord has vibrated to its touch.

Is it the thought of the lost, perhaps fallen Evelyn which spreads a gloom about my soul? No, my grief for her is constant and sincere, but not gloomy. Am I moved with sympathy for Ellen's sorrows? No, Ellen's character shines forth too brightly in the midst of trial to inspire me with discontent. Is it Blanche's pale face,

and the strange words she murmurs to herself, and which proclaim that reason is half dethroned—is it these which depress me? Or is it that strange vision of the past which momentarily rises before my eyes, as they dwell with a despairing gaze upon the future? Yes, Blanche is mingled with that dream—were it not for her I might have—shall I finish my sentence by saying I might have been guilty of a very foolish deed? But should I not be thankful, happy, joyful, that I have been permitted to rescue this unfortunate girl from the abyss of misery over which circumstance had suspended her?

She sits upon a low bench, beside me now, busily employed in winding a basket-full of worsteds. Sometimes she leans her small, beautifully shaped head against my knee, and turns her piercing dark eyes to my face, with a look of softness very unusual to them. A moment ago I ceased writing, to seek for a nimbler pen, and she took my disengaged hand and pressed it to her lips. Her childlike and affectionate manners remind me of those of Evelyn, before she had awakened to a sense of the necessities of her own heart. But Blanche is so diminutive, so fragile in her form, that these infantile ways seem not as graceful merely, but more appropriate to her.

I have not dared to converse with her upon the subject of her wrongs, and her menaced revenge. She is calm now—and one inadvertent word might render her frantic again. Both Amy and I have come to the conclusion that it would be dangerous to leave her alone; her reason is too much impaired for her to be responsible for her own acts. When I am forced to absent myself, Amy is always ready to fill my place; and Blanche is an object of such deep interest, that our watchfulness never grows wearisome.

I am quite certain that she has not met Mr. Elton since the afternoon when I last permitted her to walk alone. Fleecer has recently enlarged his establishment by uniting to it the house on our right, and as Mr. El-

ton's, apartments are now in a separate building from mine any casual rencontre with Blanche would be unlikely.

Oh! what a taintless flower was plucked from the brow of Purity, what a flawless gem from the finger of Truth, when——

* * * * *

Afternoon.

A loud knock, succeeded by the words "Couldn't you let a fellow in? Let a fellow in, can't you?" suddenly hurled me from the poetical pinnacle, upon which I held but an uneasy seat, and I lighted upon the unpicturesque plain of reality.

"Could that be Richard?" thought I. "Would he really make his way to my chamber, instead of sending for me in the parlor?"

"Miss Kitty, my dear fel—my dear Miss Kitty, I mean, are you deaf? Can't you hear, Miss Kitty? Have you lost your hearing, or aint you in?"

These words left no doubt upon my mind. I arose to give him admission, and Blanche stole timidly into a corner. As soon as I turned the key, Richard himself threw open the door and bustled in, looking from side to side to discover whether or not I was alone. This was the first time that I had beheld him since Evelyn's disappearance. He had changed both in person and in garb. He looked thin and haggard. His clothes, which had latterly been quite decent, although as *outré* as ever, were torn and threadbare. The Colonel, it would seem, no longer supplies him with a suitable wardrobe.

"You don't mind *me*—so I thought I'd come up—old friends, you know. Hav'n't made my *twallette* yet today—so don't look at me, will you?"

I smilingly replied in the negative; but I am afraid that I did so without remembering to turn away my eyes.

"What a deuced long time 'tis since I've seen you," Richard rattled on. "Where have you kept yourself, hey? You didn't see company this New-Year's, did

you? Sad things, sad things have happened since last New-Year's. Poor Evy! I can't get her out of my head. I miss her as much as Peter Schlmehil did his shadow. She was so confounded handsome; 'her beauty was her bane!' as the newspaper poets say. Didn't you always think we looked alike? A strong family likeness, wasn't there?"

I escaped a direct reply to this question by asking, "What do you mean by saying that her 'beauty was her bane?' Have you heard of her?"

Not yet—not yet. Why I didn't mean anything in particular, except that it's more than likely that some wild young rip has caught her up in the street, and run off with her in spite of all she could do. Oh! if I catch the rascal—and I will catch him—I guess he'll find out that Evy's got a brother worth having; and that in no time. The Colonel's quite of my opinion; he says that Evy's so devilish pretty that any of these mettlesome young bloods would run off with her in a jiffy. But I'll find her yet; I've searched all the city, from the Battery to Bloomingdale, already, and I'm going over the ground again, and no mistake. I'll find her, or I'll know the reason why; let me alone for it when I say I'll do a thing. Just let me get on the scent once, and the way I'll ferret them out will be a caution! Never fear, I shan't give up in a hurry!"

"You have my sincerest wishes for your success," I replied; "and perhaps you are right as to Evelyn's fate."

"Right? To be sure I'm right! Aint I always right, I'd like to know? Let me tell you that I'm a pretty cute fellow, though some people wouldn't think it. Besides, don't the Colonel say I've hit the mark?"

"Are you as intimate with the Colonel as ever?" I enquired.

"Well, now, that's a strange question. I was just thinking the same thing myself this morning, and I came to the conclusion that we were better friends than ever, but that the Colonel has grown stupid. He isn't half the company he was. He's *hipped*—that's it, he's *hipped*.

I told him so myself; and then he wont let anybody see the rooms he's just been furnishing. I've never yet got my nose further than his library, and he's got two parlours and one bedroom up stairs, and he keeps them locked up as though they were no kind of use at all. The Colonel's grown queer — quite queer. I think he misses Evy, as much as I do. It's enough to make a man blow his brains out just to think that there's no knowing what has become of her. And then mother, she's as doleful as an old magpie when it's moulting. But I do believe she thought more of the little one than of Evy, after all."

"Have you seen Ellen lately?" inquired I.

"Oh! I've seen her; but Nelly's so busy there's no such thing as a chance to say a word to her. And she hasn't ears for anybody but father. Then, Walter, how cool he takes it, hey? Never saw him shed a tear about the matter yet. Not he, the fellow's got no heart. I always said he hadn't. It was throwing Evy away to let her have him; but it was all mother's doings. Now, there's the Colonel; Walter can no more come up to him than nothing at all. If the Colonel had only have had Evy, he'd have taken better care of her."

"Mr. Merritt loved your sister very tenderly," said I.

"So he ought to — no thanks to him — how could he help loving her?"

We were interrupted at this moment by a gentle knock at the door.

Richard jumped from his seat as though a gun had been discharged near him, exclaiming, "Who's that? Don't now — don't — don't open the door yet. Couldn't you hide me somewhere? I aint fit to be seen; I haven't shaved and brushed up yet."

He ran about the little room as he said these words, peeping into every corner, and terrifying Blanche by his bewildered manner. She knocked over my work-table in escaping from him, and rushed to me for protection.

"Don't be frightened, little one — don't. Never mind me: I wasn't going to harm you."

The tap on the door was repeated. I approached to

open it, but Richard interrupted me. "Don't let anybody in. It mightn't look well, you know, after keeping them out so long, and they to find me here."

He shook his head very warningly, and as though his words were intended to express a great deal.

"But you must let me see who is there, even if I do refuse them admission," said I, forcibly passing him.

On opening the door I found Ellen standing without. She entered at my invitation; but Richard, who had concealed himself behind the bed, did not perceive her. I quietly led her up to his hiding-place, and to her astonishment she discovered her brother crouching beside the valance.

"So it's only you, Nelly, is it? Why, you scared me half to death. In the first place, I'm in a pretty pickle for anybody to see me; and in the next, you know it mightn't do for Miss Kitty to be found shut up here with a young man. Reputation, you know, reputation's everything! It's a scandalous world. I'm an independent fellow, and don't heed it a flip; but then I'm not the man to compromise an innocent woman. Well, now you've got Nelly here, Miss Kitty, I'm off! I just dropped in to talk over matters and things with you, and I knew you'd like to see me. So good-bye! I'll look in again before long, but don't have anybody else when I'm here. I'm exclusive, you know; set me down as one of your exclusives. So good-bye; good-bye, Nelly dear; haven't a moment to spare for you; good-bye, *Miss.*"

This last good-bye was intended for Blanche, by whom it was unnoticed. When Richard had departed, Ellen laid aside her bonnet and shawl, and said, "I have come for a long talk 'over matters and things,' as Richard calls it. I have great need of your friendly advice."

"I will not begrudge it to you," answered I, "for it is the only coin in which I am rich; and I generally find it an uncurrent one."

"In the first place, I must tell you that Walter has very much altered," began Ellen.

"You need hardly tell me that, dear Ellen."

"But I mean that he has altered towards father and mother, and myself. He has treated us all lately with marked and increasing reserve."

"Perhaps that is fancy, for I have myself imagined that he had grown cold towards me."

"And so he has—and—I cannot bear to speak ill of anybody, Miss Katerine, but Laura Hilson has something to do with this change. She is always with Walter; she meets him in the street when he goes out; and she pretends to visit us, but she never comes except when Walter is at home. They have long talks together, and Walter will not now permit any of us to mention Evelyn or dear little Lilla."

"But he never mentioned Evelyn himself after the first few days of her absence."

"That was because the very sound of her name affected him. But now it is not grief alone that he feels; it is anger, and indignation, and shame. For a week or two past, mother's most strenuous efforts have failed to please, and her presence is an evident annoyance. This morning after breakfast he told us that as he had been very unsuccessful in business lately, he thought it quite useless, now that he had no longer either wife or child, to be harassed with the troubles, and his resources drained by the expenses of housekeeping. He concluded by saying that the house would be rented on or before the first of May, and that he should send most of the furniture to auction as soon as possible. You can easily imagine mother and father's undisguised consternation and grief. I think their troubled looks, and something mother said, must have softened Walter a little, for he told us that we must consider the furniture of our bedrooms to be our own. The question now is, what are we to do? In what manner are we to support ourselves?"

"The answer to these questions will require some reflection," replied I. "But, dear Ellen, I have long foreseen this necessary consequence of Lilla's death; and I have already thought much upon the only course which was left for you to pursue."

"Have you? oh! thank you!" returned Ellen, gratefully. "You are ever thoughtful—ever interested in the welfare of others. I expected no less from you! And now tell me your project. We must live, and the secret of living *without means* we have lost; for which I am thankful. Mother is overwhelmed with grief; father is—is—not very strong. I am the only one capable of making any exertion, and I am ready to exert myself to the utmost. Look, I have brought you my second translation to revise. I have stolen a few hours from my rest every night that it might be concluded. But I cannot hope to contribute much to our support by my pen."

"Truly, I am afraid you will hardly make a fortune, Ellen. A garret is proverbially the author's palace; and a translator cannot expect much better lodgings!"

"Then we must think of some other employment, although this is one in which I take great pleasure. As yet I cannot see my way."

"Shall I point it out, my hopeful Ellen? The path is not a smooth and thornless one, and you are too young and inexperienced to tread it alone; but perhaps a companion may be given to you."

"Go on, do go on—you have awakened my curiosity."

"You cannot speedily gain a livelihood by translating works from foreign languages, or even by selling your own productions, should you find yourself able to produce anything worth purchasing. Our most eminent writers have struggled on by slow degrees to fame, and some of them to fortune. But your necessities are too urgent to permit this delay. You must then choose a lower walk, and it may be a less congenial one."

"Since you are prevented from amusing or instructing mankind by your pen, how would you like to make yourself useful in bending the twig that inclines the tree?"

"What do you mean, dear Miss Katerine? Do you mean that I could gain a livelihood by teaching? But who would employ me?"

"I am very sorry that I cannot answer that question, Ellen, because if I could, our difficulties would be at an end."

"I could not procure a situation as governess, because I could not leave my father and mother."

"Very true."

"If I became a teacher in a school, my salary would be but a mere pittance, and I am afraid, not sufficient to maintain my parents."

"True again."

"How then can I possibly contribute to our support by teaching?" questioned Ellen rather emphatically.

"Pray tell me what you propose at once?"

"Could you not establish a school yourself?"

"That would be a wild idea, indeed! I am too young to hope to succeed in such an undertaking. Who would entrust their children to my care?"

"That is another unanswerable question, the reply to which would end our doubts. But since you look upon youth as a fault, what would you think of the undertaking, if you were assisted by a person whom time had cured of that happy failing?"

"Miss Katerine—dear, kind, good Miss Katerine!" she suddenly exclaimed, clapping her hands in delight; "Do you mean yourself?"

"Even so, Ellen, if you will enter into partnership with me?"

"But can it be possible? You—why should you?"

"If you will have a little patience I will explain everything. In the first place, my travels last summer have so seriously diminished my capital, that I no longer find my income sufficient for my absolute wants. Our cases are very similar; necessity whispers to both of us that our hands and heads must not be consecrated to idleness. I see no insurmountable barrier to my project. If we can only procure scholars, circumstance might make a very tolerable school mistress out of either of us."

"But where could we keep our school? What would become of father and mother? Where would they live?"

"They would live with us; and our school would be kept in our own house. My plan is this: we could hire a small two-story house; I can give security for the

rent; and Mr. and Mrs. Willard will of course be the nominal heads of the establishment."

"But how will we obtain scholars?"

"I have but few friends in the city, but those few are sincere ones: through their influence we may hope to obtain some pupils. Your mother has a very numerous circle of acquaintances, and through her we may procure a few more."

But if we keep house, what are we to do for furniture?"

"We shall want but little, and that little I will endeavor to supply."

"But servants—we shall need servants, and they are always expensive."

"Such as we shall need, will not be so, and we must learn to help ourselves. Blanche will be of some assistance, and Amy provides her with all necessaries, then—"

Ellen interrupted me with, "Netta! might we not take Netta? She would be very useful: her parents would willingly place her under my charge; and I could clothe her for her services, and educate her besides."

"Certainly; and see how rapidly we have arranged all the preliminaries—we have taken a house—established a school—our house is furnished, and we are provided with domestics! Come, Aladdin's lamp could hardly have done more! Why, we are quite comfortably settled *in anticipation!*"

"And I begin to think that we may be so in reality;" replied Ellen.

"Then I am further advanced than you, for I have *decided* that we may be both comfortable and content."

"If we could only hear from Evelyn—my poor, dear sister—if we could only learn her fate, we might begin the world anew. I have not followed the example of the others, Miss Katerine; I have not resigned all hope; I expect to see Evelyn again, and I do not believe that she is dead."

"Nor can I believe it. Time

Unrolls

The volume of concealment,

and we must wait until it pleases him to turn the next leaf."

Our conversation was of but little longer duration; for Ellen was anxious to return home and disclose our new scheme to her parents.

* * * * *

January 20th.

I have long neglected to despatch you this uncompleted letter, and the delay has enabled me to communicate some interesting intelligence. The pensive Amy's eye has brightened, and her gentle lips are wreathed with smiles. The world before her looks—as the world *can only look* to trustful loving youth; her own cheerful sight gives a lovely tint to the meanest object, and were not her joy clouded by the remembrance of her beloved friend Evelyn, Amy's happiness would be perfect. In a word, dear Elizabeth, her fair cheek will soon look fairer beneath the bridal veil! And the enchanted bridegroom is no other than the gay and gallant Colonel Damoreau!

The wooing has not been tedious, nor the winning difficult. There is not a spice of coquetry in Amy's disposition; she is as open as day, and as confiding as a child. Her heart responded at once to the passion she had excited, and she is too pure for concealment. Not long since she frankly confessed to me that for a year past she had entertained very warm feelings towards Colonel Damoreau. The love she experiences is a sort of clinging, worshipping admiration; she has yielded up her whole heart, and never doubts that to give all is to receive everything. I should hardly have thought that a being so soft, and sensitive, and placid as Amy, would have been the choice of our brilliant and vivacious Colonel. Yet when I see them together, I am sometimes inclined to believe that her's is the only character calculated to ensure his happiness.

The parents of Amy made no objection to their proposed son-in-law, for Amy's wishes are all-potent with them. And their scruples, had they entertained any, must have vanished before the Colonel's unequalled powers of captivation.

Love has not changed, but it has strengthened and

brought forth Amy's character, and imparted to it a deeper coloring. She was almost too meek and pensive, and her now frequently disturbed equanimity renders her more interesting. I did not give her credit for as much enthusiasm as she hourly displays, but this enthusiasm invariably has its source in, and centres upon the choice of her young heart. What a mine of love is the breast of a woman! With what lavish recklessness she heaps its treasures upon the one to whom she has plighted her faith! If men were as grateful as women are loving, the world would contain but few broken hearts.

When Amy's engagement was communicated to me, she answered my congratulations by saying: "I am in that happy state when not one drop more can be added to the chalice; I have dreamed of such happiness, but never expected to find it."

I inquired of her yesterday whether she had spoken to Colonel Damoreau of Blanche, and she replied that to do so were to boast of a very accidental charity; and that after her marriage, Blanche should be allowed to choose whether she would reside with Amy or myself.

At all events, Blanche will not lose her protector; but the poor girl has become so dear to me, that I cannot endure the thought of a separation.

Ellen and I have entered with spirit into our new project. We have made unremitting exertions to procure scholars, and have obtained the promise of several in the spring. We have also selected a small cottage in Twenty-seventh street, not merely because the rent is low, but because the air in that part of the city is so much purer, and consequently healthier than in most other situations; and to me a pure atmosphere is one of the greatest luxuries in life.

Mrs. Willard at first very strenuously opposed Ellen's views and mine, but she has now so completely lost her energy that her objections were quickly overruled. Mr. Merritt said very little upon the subject. Mr. Willard begged that we would make him of service in keeping the books and collecting the quarterly payments; adding that he has lost his taste for Wall street, after having lost everything else which he brought there.

Ellen's manuscript was despatched a week ago to the same publisher who brought out her former translation. She stated in the note which accompanied it, that she had been paid fifteen dollars for the first translation, and that the transaction had been made through Mr. Elton. Yesterday we received an answer which occasioned us no little surprise; but fortunately the manuscript was not returned.

The publishers stated that the former translation was not sold but *given* to them by Mr. Elton; and that as they were unwilling to run the risk of producing it at their own cost, the printing expenses had been paid by him. They added that the work had unexpectedly been so successful, that they were willing to purchase a translation by the same author, and enclosed the fifteen dollars mentioned.

I shall not endeavour to tell you what I felt on reading that note—how like the generous friend of former days!—how—Ah! it is vain to dwell upon the past.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Then she plots, then she raminates, then she devises, and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect."

Merry Wives of Windsor.

From the Same to the Same.

February 20th.

TWICE have I taken up my pen to write to you, dearest Elizabeth, and twice have I laid it aside and been summoned away by household duties. I am no longer a "lady of leisure," seeking amusement only in occupa-

tion. My time is no more my own; my hours are portioned out, and my minutes are of value. The change will bring added care, but increased happiness; for to extend my sphere of use, must be to extend my sphere of enjoyment.

How I wish that you could spend even one hour with me, and bestow a few approving glances in reviewing my little *ménage*! To become acquainted with every nook and corner of our city-cottage and bandbox-dwelling, would not consume much of your invaluable time. But I am running on without remembering that I have not communicated the events of the last month except in thought, and that this ideal and unsubstantial correspondence is, in our present corporeal state of existence, a rather uncertain mode of transmitting intelligence.

I will endeavour to be more explicit. You have not forgotten the scheme which Ellen and I, having once decided upon, soon determined to carry into execution? A history of the difficulties which we encountered might be as tedious to you as they were annoying to us; therefore we will pass them over. Behold us, then, in our new home, with which, if you will place your hand in mine and follow me, I will make you thoroughly acquainted. I will guide you along as the mesmerisers lead their *clairvoyantes*, in spirit, until we reach the haven of our wishes.

We are standing beside Union Park, gazing with a crowd of idlers, upon the beautiful fountain in its centre, which shoots up a snowy column of sparkling foam high above the surrounding trees. How that fountain freshens the air, and were it spring-time you could not pause here without inhaling the breath of flowers. Many a summer afternoon have I lingered beside this huge gate to watch the crowd of gambolling children who longed to snatch one forbidden flower from the blooming beds, or to enjoy one bound across the velvet lawn which their tiny feet were not permitted to press. But the snow lies thickly on flower-beds, lawn, and gravelled walks, and the Park looks cold and deserted—but not so cheerless, not so deserted, as that splendid mansion

on the right. Every window is shut, every blind and shutter tightly closed, and the house has a funereal air which makes my heart sad. The spring approaches, and the flowers of the Park will bloom again; but when shall the hearts that withered in that stately mansion know a second spring? We will not linger; I never dare to pause for a moment, when I pass by that once happy dwelling—for once it was the home of Evelyn!

Follow with me the rail-road track until we reach Twenty-seventh street. We pass by many handsome and some picturesque looking buildings just erected, and others in progress. By the way, that rail-road, or rather the cars which travel upon it, are an inestimable convenience. We up-town democrats have a coach and two, or coach and four, at our service at all hours, and may travel some three miles for twice as many cents. I believe New York is the only city of the Union where rail-road cars and omnibuses are patronized by the wealthiest and most exclusive classes, as well as by the less affluent

We have reached Twenty-seventh street. Do you see that neat row of miniature cottages, with their narrow, quaint, green porches, and Liliputian court-yards? One of them I now call *home*, and it is a home of harmony and peace to more than myself. Enter with me at the gate. You see we are favoured with a very few rods of ground within this court-yard; but small as is the space for cultivation, Ellen and I have determined that when the sweet spring time comes, a variegated honeysuckle vine shall clamber along our trellised porch; and that a bed of mignonette and sweet alysum shall bloom around the honeysuckle's roots.

Enter, for the door swings back as lightly as if it said "Welcome!" We pass along the contracted entry—but unfortunately its dimensions will not permit us to display much grace of motion should we attempt to walk side by side. This is our parlor, sitting and dining-room. It needed but a very few yards of carpeting to cover this floor; and the pattern is neat, is it not? Pray admire our ingenuity in the invention and construction

of the principal article of furniture. That ottoman-sofa was made by Ellen and myself. That is to say, the rough wooden frame-work, formed of a few boards joined lengthwise together, was fabricated by an ordinary carpenter; but Ellen and I stuffed the sofa with hair and moss, covered it with this pretty blue and white chintz, and made these three square pillows, which very comfortably protect the shoulders from the wall. Our oriental couch was, as you may suppose, not very expensive. The flower vases which you observe on that mantel, were presents from Amy. The small round table between the windows, which holds a few choice books, was my purchase. It is hardly large enough for us to invite a friend to dinner, but we are but four, and as Ellen says, we feel *more neighbourly* for sitting close together.

These folding-doors open into an apartment of the same dimensions as the parlor; and the desks and benches, and slates, and pile of books, and wooden clock on the mantel, have already told you that it was the school-room. Here is my seat on the right of the fireplace, and there is Ellen's on the left. Everything is ready and in order—desks, books, benches—all, all but the pupils! They, alas! have not yet appeared. We have been promised several scholars, but some are finishing their quarters at other schools, some are ill, and the parents of several think that the weather is yet too cold for their children to venture out early in the morning. We can only wait with patience. These windows open upon a dwarf piazza, and beyond you may see an apology for a garden. But I will engage that it shall yield bouquets enough before next fall to supply Ellen's *old flower-woman* all the summer through.

And now let us ascend the stairs—do they not remind you of those erected in a cage for white mice? The front room over the parlor is Mrs. Willard's bed-chamber. Has it not quite an air of elegance? This furniture was presented to her by her son-in-law. For my part, I think the room is lumbered up with such a heavy bureau and marble-topped wash-stand, &c. &c.; and

that handsome dressing-glass, much too large to be inserted between those windows, reminds me of the Vicar of Wakefield's family picture, which could not be forced through the door. But Mrs. Willard delights in these relics of by-gone days, out of place or in place.

The chamber over the school-room is Ellen's and mine. You will quickly recognise the blue sofa-bedstead and arm-chair that stood so long in my bedroom-boudoir at Fleecer's. And there is the little rosewood secretary which I long since gave to Ellen. The rest of the furniture has been transported here from Ellen's chamber at Mr. Merritt's.

Blanche and Netta sleep in the attic, and their accommodations are by no means uncomfortable. After you have paid a visit to the kitchen you will be familiar with the location of every room in the house, and may transport yourself hither in thought when you please, and without further assistance from me.

Mrs. Willard's depression of spirits increases, and is accompanied by a total inactivity both of mind and body. She takes no interest in our household arrangements, and never even gives us the benefit of her advice. Ellen and I, by turns, prepare and cook the simple meals of the family, and we have essayed to instruct Blanche in the culinary art; but Blanche was never designed for a cook. The poor creature faithfully and mechanically follows our directions, but she seems to be deprived of the power of thinking herself, and is a most inefficient assistant.

Netta, who has grown so plump and pretty that she is hardly recognizable, is maid of all work, and as swift when she runs on errands as though she were a descendant of the celebrated Lightfoot. She is so strongly attached to Ellen, and so delighted at the prospect of remaining with her, that affection quickens her intellect, and she learns her duty with astonishing rapidity.

Netta's mother was at first half unwilling to part with the child. She seemed to think that she could retain Netta herself, and that Ellen would still instruct and clothe her. Too sudden prosperity has made this wo-

man ungrateful, and I begin to discover something sinister and hypocritical in the expression of her countenance. As soon as she was aware that she had but little more to expect from her benefactress, and that Ellen was no longer able even to provide for Netta, unless the child was placed under her own care, the wily creature made a virtue of necessity, and in a whining tone said, that since the young lady looked upon it *as a favor*, she might take the child and welcome.

Mr. Willard is quite charmed with his new abode, and pays me the compliment to say that my presence enlivens the house. He intends—at least so he says—to make himself very useful in keeping our accounts, and collecting our debts, and even talks of teaching some of the little ones French himself, for in his youth he was an excellent French scholar.

You will probably be anxious to hear something of my departure from Fleecer's, but I have nothing very particular to relate. Mr. Elton casually learned my projected removal, but his only opportunity of speaking upon the subject was at table. He made one more fruitless attempt to obtain an interview with me, but I pertinaciously and undisguisedly shunned him. Let us change the subject—the coward flies from what he fears, and there is sometimes wisdom in following a coward's example.

One word of Amy—the gentle Bride that is to be. Colonel Damoreau had selected the first of May for their nuptial day, but that day was fraught with too many ominous recollections for Amy to look forward to it with pleasure. The Colonel then entreated for an earlier period, but Amy's parents refuse to yield her up before June. The third of June has now been chosen for the Bridal day. The month of roses will indeed be a roseate one for Amy.

* * * * *

231.

Wish us joy of our first pupils! Ellen and I have congratulated each other, and nodded our heads approvingly one to the other full twenty times to-day, for

now we may style ourselves superintendents of a school in good earnest.

This morning, at nine o'clock, two little girls, residing in the neighborhood, were brought to us by their father, and their education in all useful and ornamental branches very solemnly consigned to our tender care. The father, Mr. Topham, is a rough, good-hearted individual, who has risen by slow degrees from a very low station, and amassed considerable wealth by hard labour. Illiterate himself, he desired that "*his young ladies*" should receive the advantages of an "ornamental education," as he termed it.

"And Missus," said he, turning to me, "I calculate you'll teach 'em manners in partikular. For I don't care the value of *that* (snapping his fingers), what their educations cost, so that they knows as much as other people's folks."

I promised that the "young ladies" should receive all due polish at our hands, and the father scraped his foot and bobbed his head, and departed well pleased with my assurances.

We conducted the two half-terrified little girls into the school-room, untied their tiny quilted bonnets and hung them on the pegs about the room, unwound their warm woollen mufflers from their throats, and laid aside their short cloaks, mits, and India rubber shoes. As we performed these tender offices I experienced a delightful sensation, which told me that I should derive much pleasure in cultivating the undeveloped minds of these dear children, and moulding and instructing their young hearts.

The elder child, who carried on her arm a little round basket containing their luncheon, was not more than eight years of age; the other was two years younger. When the little basket was placed in a corner, the cloaks and hats hung up, and the very unnecessary ceremony of marking the pegs with the names of the children performed, I took my seat at my desk, and Ellen followed my example and placed herself at hers. The large blank book before me was then opened, and I rather

pompously inserted the children's names—"Susan Topham—Anne Topham."

What was next to be done? I looked at Ellen and she looked inquiringly at me, and the children looked at the empty benches, and vacant desks, and then at us, and the younger one smiled so sweetly that I could not refrain from kissing her rosy lips. I wondered whether the thought flitted through their little heads which entered mine—that there were as many teachers as scholars, making a superfluity of the former.

I was really at a loss in what way to commence, when Ellen opened her desk, and taking out a small bible, laid it before me, and said: "Will you read a chapter, Miss Katerine?"

I wish you could hear Ellen's musical voice: it grows sweeter every day.

She then placed the two little girls upon one of the long benches, and sat herself between them, taking a hand of either child.

I opened the Holy Book she had presented me, and read the first chapter of Matthew. We then knelt, and Ellen mingled her voice with mine as we repeated the Lord's Prayer. When we rose from our knees, I felt inspired with an earnest desire to be of real service to those two young children, I already loved them, and I inwardly thanked Heaven for my pleasurable emotions.

Ellen and I had long since settled upon our mode of tuition, and resolved to make the school-hours of our pupils the most pleasant instead of the most tedious of the day. It was so easy, we thought, to combine amusement with instruction. We looked over Combe's Physiology, and Johnson's Economy of Health, and many similar works, and determined to correct all errors and abuses prevalent in schools. We had become quite Quixotic in our intentions, and were ready to attack windmills as well as actual giants and school-room monstrosities.

All our benches were made with backs, that no contracted shoulders and crooked spines might be occasioned by seats without a support.

At certain hours of the day it was decided that the children should march around the room two by two, and keeping the step one with the other. This promenading would not only give them exercise, but would contribute in imparting that easy and graceful gait, in which Americans are particularly deficient.

The children were to be indulged with an hours recess from twelve o'clock to one, and we had provided ourselves with skipping ropes, balls, games, and Calisthenic sticks, for their amusement.

The school closed at three. It was a suggestion of Ellen's that part of the instruction should be oral, and we had provided ourselves, at some expense, with several large volumes descriptive of the vegetable and animal kingdom, and illustrated by colored plates. At a certain hour of the day, one or more of these plates, representing birds, beasts, insects, or trees, herbs, or flowers, was displayed to the children's delighted eyes, and an interesting sketch of the history of the animal, &c., or the growth of the tree or flower given them: On one day the book was to be placed in Ellen's hands, and on the next in mine—in good sooth, I think we shall derive quite as much pleasure from the proceeding as the children. If we could only carry out all our plans, we should quite revolutionize the usual, and long-established habits and regulations of modern schools; habits and regulations which are so apt to render school a prison, and instruction a wearisome task. We shall soon look upon ourselves as the reformers and benefactors of the age, and grow proud of our position and authority.

I shall not give you a detailed account of the manner in which Ellen and I won the affections of little Susan and Annie, nor tell you how we passed the first day in our new capacity of teachers. It is enough to say that the children did not appear to be fatigued, nor were we wearied; and that, when I hooked little Annie's cloak, and tied on her bonnet, at three o'clock, she of her own accord put up her cherry lips to press mine. I will only add that I have strong suspicions that Ellen followed my example as she arrayed little Susan, and affectionately saluted her pupil at parting.

At half past three we dined, and in the afternoon we received a visit from a formal looking, precise old lady, dressed in deep mourning, and accompanied by an awkward little girl about ten years of age.

The lady informed us in round phrase but somewhat sharp accents, that she had come to inquire about our school. She said that she desired to place her granddaughter under the care of *respectable* persons for a few years, but that she should send her to Madame Chegaray's to "*finish off*." She added that she was very particular in regard to her grand-daughter's *morals*, that she wished no outlandish notions to be put into her head, and that she considered her religious education an entirely different department from that which we were to superintend, and that it must not be interfered with.

I ventured to suggest that the instruction which a child daily received, unavoidably formed a part of its religious education, although the word religion might never be used.

She assured me that I was totally in error; that she found me, as she had anticipated, quite in the dark on some subjects; and that should the child be placed under my charge, she *must positively insist* that I would teach her no catechism, and put no "new-fangled," "outlandish," notions into her head. In spite of her dictatorial air and assumption of superiority, I promised very quietly to comply with her wishes as far as I understood them.

She then directed the child to rise, and speak to her new teachers. The little girl thrust out her lips, and twisted her fingers without obeying. Ellen approached her, and gently took her hand, but she snatched it away, and rudely cried out, "go along!"

The grand-mother, instead of rebuking her for this conduct, laughed and said, that the dear child was strange, and must be coaxed—and that she was for all the world just like her poor dear mother. Very soon after this, she took her leave, promising to send the child to school the next morning, and again repeating that she desired that we would put no queer ideas into her grand-daughter's head, for upon that point she was *very positive*.

Ellen looked quite dismayed at the lady's stately demeanor, and the condescending manner in which she addressed us, but I was engrossed by the thoughts of the untractable twig which we were doomed to bend.

* * * * *

24th.

A present from Amy—the thoughtful Amy! She has just sent me a couple of medals—one a gold one, representing the sun, and a silver one, shaped in a half moon;—the first to be worn by the most amiable and industrious child, and the other by the best scholar. The medals were accompanied by a prize work-box, which at the end of the quarter was to be awarded to the most uniformly deserving pupil. Ellen is so delighted with these gifts, that I can hardly prevent her from putting on her hat to seek Amy, and thank her at once.

Our school hours were not to-day characterized by so much harmony and pleasantness as yesterday. Miss Alexina Seraphina Smith, our new pupil, was even more perverse and ill-bred than we at first supposed. Ellen gave her a seat beside little Susan, whom Miss Alexina amused herself by pinching and troubling with her feet; at the same time informing the little girl that her *grandma* wouldn't let her keep company with everybody's children. She curled the leaves of the book which I placed in her hands, drew figures on her slate, instead of writing, giggled in my face while I was talking to her, and paid not the slightest attention to my requests.—Ellen begins to fear that keeping school may not prove as delightful an occupation as it at first seemed, but I will not permit myself to come to the same conclusion.

I this morning made a calculation of our necessary domestic expenses, and found that, with the strictest economy, the quarterly payments of twenty-four scholars would hardly maintain us. Twenty-four scholars! and we have but three! Well, well, there is no use of troubling ourselves in anticipation. Our welfare is in the hands of Divine Providence; and though we are

bound to make every exertion in our power, I still believe that some Phoenix Good ever springs from the ashes of Disappointment.

* * * * *

Evening.

I cannot sleep without communicating to you some joyful intelligence, for which I have just offered up my thanks to Heaven. Mr. Willard has to-day obtained the office of book-keeper in a new mercantile establishment, which is rapidly rising in importance. He was so much overjoyed by his good fortune, that, on relating it to us, he wept like a child. I am sorry to add that his wife merely shrugged her shoulders, and remarked that a pitiful six hundred dollars a year was a most munificent God-send.

But I have reserved, for the last, the at once most pleasing and most painful portion of the intelligence. Thorough whose influence, think you, was this situation obtained for Mr. Willard? Through the unasked aid of Mr. Elton.

“How I do love that Mr. Elton!” said Ellen enthusiastically, and turning to me as she spoke. “Do not you?”

Ah! Ellen, little didst thou imagine how deeply those casual words sank into my heart, and how often a whispering voice within me repeated that searching question — “Do not you?” I had almost answered it when my eyes fell upon Blanche. She was sitting beside the hearth, with her elbows resting upon her knees, and her wan, but lovely face leaning upon her hands. That sight chilled the warm blood that glowed about my heart, and Ellen’s spirit-echoed question met no reply.

CHAPTER IX.

"So many are
The sufferings which no human aid can reach,
It needs must be a duty doubly sweet
To heal the few we can."

ZAPOLYA.

March 1st.

WE had just dismissed our little school to-day, and Ellen and I were spreading the table for dinner, when Netta, who had been permitted to pay a visit to her parents, burst into the room.

"Mother says she'd be much obliged——Mother told me to run home as fast as I could and say that she'd——" began the little girl, but she was too much out of breath to proceed.

"Not so fast—not so fast, Netta," said Ellen kindly. "Rest yourself, and then deliver your mother's message."

"Mother only told me to say," continued the child, "that she would be very much obliged if you could send some red wine, or any kind of strengthening wine at all, for a poor sick creature that she don't know what to do with."

"Is the wine for one of your mother's boarders, Netta?" inquired I.

"Yes ma'am, so mother said; but she wouldn't let me in to see her, for she said that the woman couldn't bear to be disturbed."

"I must confess that this answer awakened my suspicion. I have lately had reason to believe that Nancy, in spite of all her promises, retains and indulges her fondness for spirituous liquors. Nor is the honesty of this woman by any means unimpeached. She has on

two occasions induced her child to purloin trifling articles of dress, and when the theft was discovered showed but little compunction. Netta wept in terrified sorrow when Ellen made her sensible of her crime, and in vivid colours painted its consequences. But how can a child, wholly ignorant of virtue, be responsible for vice?

Ellen, on detecting these propensities in Netta, did not for a moment, as on a former occasion, entertain the idea of relinquishing all interest in the child. For Ellen now grows stronger in proportion as her labors increase, and she shrinks not from the performance of any good deed, however difficult, hazardous or unattractive. When we remember the state of abject poverty and degradation from which Netta's mother has been rescued, her ingratitude appears doubly revolting, and to an unreflecting mind might prove discouraging. But true benevolence neither looks nor hopes for gratitude as a reward, nor needs any incentive in the pursuit of good.

"Netta, did your mother request that we should visit her sick lodger?" asked Ellen.

"No ma'am—I said you would come and help take care of her, but she said better not, for the poor woman wouldn't let nobody at all near her."

"Very well, Netta," replied L. "Now bring up dinner, and we will see about this matter by and by."

"Dear Miss Katerine, we must not mind what Nancy says," Ellen began as the child left the room. "We must go and see this suffering creature; and we can buy a bottle of port-wine on the way—I have some silver up stairs."

"Let us first discover whether or not the wine would be of service to her. At all events we will pay Nancy a visit, and hear her story."

When our frugal dinner was concluded, Ellen and I set out without delay, and Mr. Willard promised to follow us in half an hour, as it would soon be too dark for us to return home in safety.

Netta's mother resides in Grand street. She has given up the washing which we procured for her, and which

yielded her a very tolerable livelihood, and has now opened a small store for the sale of Spruce Beer, Ginger Pop, Tobacco, Vegetables, Candies, and a heterogeneous medley of other articles, which bring her as various a class of customers. She has also two spare apartments which she rents out whenever she can obtain boarders.

We found Nancy standing upon the steps of her shop cutting the outer leaves from a withered cabbage to make it look like a fresh one. She greeted us without surprise. The baby, who was dabbling in a pail of water that had just been used to wash the cabbage, began to crow and clap its little hands at the sight of Ellen, and toddling towards her stretched out its arms to meet her embrace.

"Well, Nancy, we have come to see your patient," said I.

"And it's just like you, and mighty good of you too, Miss," replied she; "but it's no use in life, for she won't see you, the craythur."

"What ails her?" inquired I.

"Well then, and I can't just say; but she's been down sick ever since she came here, and that's more than a fortnight since. She's a young thing too, and as purty a face as ever you clapped your eyes on; but she won't have a doctor come near her; and she doesn't eat and drink what would keep the life in a mouse—but she just lies there, and groans sometimes 'till you'd think the very breath was going out of her."

"You must persuade her to see us Nancy," said Ellen. "We cannot be of much assistance without seeing her."

"It ain't no use at all, at all—but I'll try if you like." And, with these words, Nancy entered a small room which opened into the shop. She remained absent a very few minutes, and returning, said—"the craythur won't listen to it—I know'd it all along of her."

"But indeed we *must* see her," replied Ellen with a determination of manner which surprised me. "I will take the responsibility upon myself;" and she advanced towards the half-closed door and gently pushed it open.

I silently followed her, and Nancy made no effort to prevent us.

The room was small and close, the floor bare, and the only articles of furniture a wretched cot, a broken chair, and an old wash-stand. From a nail beside the cot hung a black dress of fine materials, but worn and discolored. Upon the chair lay a shawl of the same sombre color. We looked towards the cot—through the scanty covering we could trace the outlines of an emaciated form, but the face of the invalid was concealed by the sheet which, with convulsive hands, she pressed upon her brow. Those hands were small, and white as the driven snow, but so thin and transparent that the delicate bones and interlacing veins were distinctly visible.

“We have come to see you,” said Ellen, kindly and bending over the invalid.

The unhappy creature did not speak, but more tightly grasped the sheet which she held over her face.

Ellen grew pale and trembled, and I advanced to her assistance.

“You must pardon our intrusion,” said I, addressing myself to the person in the bed. “We heard that you were very ill, and were anxious to be of some service to you.”

A low sob was the only answer.

“Pray tell us how we can aid you?” entreated Ellen, but in a faltering tone.

She received no reply.

“At least let us know in what manner you suffer?” said I, laying my hand upon the attenuated one of the invalid.

She shivered at the touch, but still spoke not.

“Indeed, we feel for you very deeply;” murmured Ellen in a tearful voice. “We grieve from our hearts at your wretched state—pray, pray speak to us—pray permit us to aid you?”

These words were only acknowledged by a succession of deep, heart-rending sobs, and the slight form beneath the covering shook as though with convulsions.

“Well, and then I’m thinking you’d better leave the

poor craythur quiet, for fretting mightn't do her any good, and it's just unpossible to make her do what she sets her face agin." These words were uttered by Nancy, who had thrust her head inside of the room to see what was going on.

"We had better follow Nancy's advice," said I to Ellen, trying to draw her away. "I am afraid we only make the poor creature worse."

Ellen was strongly inclined to linger, but I succeeded in leading her from the apartment.

"Is she very weak?" inquired I of Nancy.

"Why, then, she's just as weak as a wet rag, and not a bit able to help herself;" was Nancy's reply.

"She has no fever, has she?"

"No, not a whit—it's cold and not hot she is."

"Then," I replied, "we will send her a little mulled port-wine, and some gruel, and you must get her to taste them before she sleeps to night."

"That I will," said Nancy, in a tone of sincere kindness, "for if she don't get something to help her it's not often she'll sleep again or wake either."

Ellen was now content to hurry home, that the gruel and wine might be prepared. We met Mr. Willard just as we were leaving the shop. He joined us and we hasten towards Broadway, entered an omnibus, and were soon at our own door.

The gruel was made, and the wine mulled without delay, and as it was too late for Netta to carry them alone, Mr. Willard kindly accompanied her.

While we were awaiting his return, before tea was served, Richard, who had learnt our number from his father, paid us his first visit. He looked ill, and his habiliments were even in a more forlorn and tattered condition than when I last beheld him, but his blustering manners were not changed, nor his loud speech softened.

"Well now, you don't say!" he exclaimed, on entering, nodding his head approvingly as he looked around the room. "What a snug, cozey, little box you've got here to be sure! And a sofa too——" he flung himself hea-

vily upon our home-made couch, but as quickly sprang up again. "Whew! hard as a rock! Why didn't you let a fellow know? Why it ain't half as comfortable as the soft side of a plank, any how you can fix it! Ah! Miss Kitty, do you remember the lounges at Evy's? Poor Evy! Poor Evy! I haven't given her up yet—I'd find her if she was as hard to get at as a needle in a haystack. Leave me alone for that! Do you know that Walter has taken rooms at the American? I met him in the street to-day, and he looked, for all the world, like the live skeleton at the Museum—only Walter's thinner, and his skin's as yellow as though he was born with the yellow fever.

"A fellow told me the other day that his wife was dead, and that he was making up to that big, black-eyed Miss Hilson. But I told the booby he'd better cut his eye-teeth a little sharper before he told a lie again: and that if he didn't look out how he killed my sister before her time I'd knock him into a cocked hat—I would.

"Just after I had met Walter, whom should I pop down upon but the very girl herself—Laura Hilson I mean. Up she came, and shook hands as pleasant, and looked as smiling as a basket of chips. And then she said that sure as Fate, Evy was somewhere about, and I mustn't give up searching for her, for that she must be found. And after that, Miss Laura shook hands again and asked me to come and see her—mighty polite of her wasn't it?"

"I should be very well pleased to think that it was *mere* politeness," I replied, "but I fear that Miss Hilson had some ulterior end to be gained by this invitation."

"You don't though, do you? Well now, there may be something in that too," said Richard, knowingly, and brushing up his hair as he spoke. "Who knows but she wants to make up to me herself? To be sure I ain't much of a catch in the way of the "*ready needful*," but I've known girls fall over head and ears in love with many a worse looking fellow; I shouldn't wonder if I'd hit the nail. I'm very much obliged to her, but it's no go. I wouldn't give up my independence, and be saddled with a wife, for the best woman that breathes. If I could only

find Evy I shouldn't care much if—present company always excepted, for good manners—if there wasn't another woman in the world!"

"How do you like our house?" inquired Ellen.

"Oh! it's just the thing—first rate! Just the pattern of a big sized mouse-trap. I hope you've got a spare bed, for I shouldn't wonder if I pulled up stakes and settled down here myself."

I began to feel alarmed at this threat, and Ellen noticing my consternation, quickly replied, "No, indeed, Richard—"

"Call me *Dick*, will you?"

"No, indeed, *Dick* then, we have not a single spare bed."

"That makes no odds," answered Richard accommodatingly. "This sofa's rather hard to be sure, but I suppose I could put up with it for lack of a better."

"You will do no such thing," said Mrs. Willard, who entered the room at this moment. "This is our only sitting room, and the house is crowded and uncomfortable enough without your presence to make it more so. You are old enough in all conscience to take care of yourself, without being a burden upon your relatives; therefore you need not expect to come here."

"Well, you needn't be so snappish, mother—I ain't quite *sure* whether you've left my head on my shoulders or not. But you've been as sour as a bowl of milk after a thunder-storm ever since we lost poor Evy. No wonder! no wonder! we'll forgive you that—I can't stand it myself—it knocks me all in a heap for the rest of the day whenever I think of her. But, Nelly, where's the governor?"

"I think that is father at the street door," replied Ellen, rising.

Mr. Willard entered with Netta, and a few minutes afterwards we took our seats at the tea table. It was not easy to make room for Richard, but he squeezed himself between Ellen and me, and declared that he was as "snug as a bug in a rug!"

Netta brought word that the poor woman had been

persuaded to drink the wine, and that Nancy thought it had done our patient good already. This intelligence gave a delightful flavour to the cup of tea which I was quaffing, and if I may judge by Ellen's looks it must have rendered her's equally palatable.

CHAPTER X.

"We'll gather up fresh roses for you soon,
 Oh! that they could be given by smiles or tears!
 But smiles are fruitless sunshine—tears cold rain."
Blanche of Navarre.

From the Same to the Same.

March 2d.

BREAKFAST was hardly over this morning, when Ellen and I, both eager to hear of our unknown patient's convalescence, proposed to clear away the service ourselves, and despatched Netta with a bowl of gruel to her mother.

Netta remained absent so long that our little pupils arrived before she returned, and we were obliged to commence our school duties. I blush to confess it, but I hardly know what chapter in the Bible I read; and for once our Saviour's beautiful, and spirit-moving prayer, was repeated with my lips alone, and its deep, spiritual meanings unremembered.

Ellen was sitting at her desk with a colored alphabet in her hand; beside her stood little Annie, listening, with her roguish eyes upturned as Ellen explained the positive difference between the letters *m* and *n*. I with a spelling-book before me, was as diligently, but less successfully, employed in endeavouring to impress Miss Alexina Seraphina and little Susan with some faint idea of ortho-

graphy. Before the children had made any decided progress in the acquisition of knowledge, we were interrupted by the entrance of Netta.

She ran up to Ellen without ceremony, exclaiming: "I couldn't help it—I couldn't come before; mother kept me talking—she was in a great taking on, dear Miss Ellen, and don't know at all what to do, for she says it is the strangest thing she ever knew to happen her."

"What is the strangest thing? Tell us *what*, Netta?" replied Ellen, with undisguised anxiety.

"Why the poor sick woman—why you see—"

"Quick—quick—what of her? Tell me quickly, Netta," said Ellen, hurriedly.

"Why she's clean gone!" answered the child.

"Not dead? Oh, not dead?" murmured Ellen.

"No, no, she's gone away; mother don't know where, nor when she went, nor anything about it, only that she's clean gone!"

"How strange!" said Ellen, turning to me; for I had forsaken my post and approached the instant I saw her agitation.

"When does your mother think that she left?" questioned I of Netta.

"Mother says that last night the poor thing seemed a great sight better, after she had taken the wine; and then she said she could go to sleep, and turned over on the pillow; and so mother left her as quiet as could be. And this morning there wasn't no noise in the room, so mother thought she might be sleeping yet, and wouldn't disturb her. Then when Billy came in for his breakfast—for he don't get it until after he's been out a couple of hours or so—he made racket enough to raise all out of doors. So mother thought the woman must be awake, and she went in to see her; and the bed was just empty, and there wasn't anybody in the room at all; but there was some silver lying upon the washstand. So mother looked about and called out, but nobody answered, for the woman was gone! Mother was dreadful grieved about her, for she paid good board, and wasn't a bit able to take care of herself."

Netta had given us all the information in her power, and I thought it best to dismiss her in spite of the questions which hovered on Ellen's lips, and which the child would have spent half the day in answering. It was necessary that we should return to our school duties, and I set the example to my young associate. — But the day was a heavy one, and to Ellen more than heavy—sad. Yef she had no sufficient cause for her dejection.

It was her turn to open the book of prints, and she selected an engraving representing different species of ants. But she was in no mood to do justice to the wonderful history of this interesting little insect, and I smilingly took the book from her passive hands. Susan and Annie, and even Miss Alexina Seraphina, were soon standing motionless at my knees; and with open mouths and wondering eyes gazing in my face and listening to the singular narration.

“Do the big white ants really have little black nigger slaves?” inquired Susan. “And do they really fight great battles, and take prisoners, and all that?”

“What do they give the little wee ones to eat?” asked Annie.

I answered their questions, and looked inquiringly towards Miss Alexina, in the hope that she also would evince her interest by some appropriate query, but she pouted out her lips at my glance, and remained silent.

Ellen was relieved when the school hours were over, and I hardly less so.

Mr. Willard conversed very animatedly at the dinner table, about his new occupation; and I was beginning to be enlivened by his mirth, when Netta entered and said: “Billy's here, and wants to speak to Miss Ellen.”

Ellen rose, and I involuntarily rose and accompanied her into the entry.

Billy was leaning against the wall, with a huge bundle of books beneath one arm, and a package of newspapers under the other.

“I told mother,” began he, as soon as he saw Ellen, “that it was worth a good licking to me if I got up as far as this, for there's not much to be done in the way

of selling books in these parts; but she said it was going to oblige you, 'so here goes!' says I, and up I came like a shot."

"What message did your mother send?" asked Ellen.

"Well, and that's more than I can say," answered Billy, scratching his head; "for it's gone clear out of my head. I only know it was something about the poor woman at our house, and your coming to look after her."

"Has she returned, then?" inquired I.

"Not as I know of, for I never heard tell that she was gone; but she's there now."

"Is she? Oh, thank you for bringing me word, Billy; I shall remember you for this!" said Ellen.

"That's all!" cried Billy, retreating towards the door. I advanced to say a word to him, but he nodded his head, and putting his thumb to his nose as he noticed my movement, bellowed out, "Mark's well! Mark's well, never fear. I knew it was he you were going to ask about: Mark's thriving like a potatoe patch!" and the little peripatetic vender of literary wares disappeared.

"Let us go instantly," said Ellen. "You will accompany me, will you not?"

"Yes, although I do not think Billy's message a very lucid one; and it is possible that he may have made some mistake about the return of the woman"

"Do not, I entreat you, make such a suggestion," replied Ellen. "I feel so deeply interested in that unfortunate creature! How bitterly she sobbed! And did you notice how small and slender, and almost fleshless her hands were?"

Mr. and Mrs. Willard, who have a singular and mutual aversion to a tête à tête with each other, objected to our sudden departure. But we silenced the former by assuring him that we had been sent for to see a very sick person; and Mrs. Willard's opposition has lost all weight, for she makes it a rule to find fault with our actions.

And now—now how shall I relate to you the thrilling scene which ensued, when Ellen and I once more found ourselves in Nancy's little shop?

"The poor craythur's back agin," said Nancy, addressing us. "It was myself that met her, not a stone's throw off, reeling along and snatching hold of the lamp-posts to keep upon her feet. She was trying to get back here, and couldn't. Just as I come up, every drop of strength went out of her, and down she fell plump upon the stones like a log. And I lifted her up in my two arms, for she isn't as weighty as a bag of feathers, and carried her into the house, and put her on her own bed, and there she's been ever since. I'd have sent you word three hours ago, for the craythur looked every blessed minute as if she was just going off; but I hadn't a soul to send, until Billy, the darling, came home to his dinner."

"Thank you, thank you for sending," said Ellen hastily; "But now let us see her! Shall we go right in?"

"Sure, and you may, for I don't think she'll heed you nor anybody else, for she's clean out of her wits, and don't seem to notice nobody at all, at all!"

While the woman was still speaking, Ellen had pushed open the chamber-door, and I followed her into the room. The unfortunate invalid was stretched upon the outside of the bed, the fragile form enveloped in an old shawl; She was attired in the tattered black dress which we had before seen hanging beside the cot. She appeared to be sleeping—her face was turned towards the wall, and partly concealed by her attenuated hands.

The instant we entered, my eyes rested upon an infant's small, rose-colored slipper which lay at the foot of the cot. Ellen's glance followed mine, and springing forward with a wild cry she caught up the slipper and sank upon her knees beside the bed.

The slumbering sufferer was aroused—flinging on her feeble arms, she slowly turned her face towards us! One look—one fleeting look of mingled joy, surprise, and horror—but no, I could not believe my eyes, although glancing from the appalling object before them, they beheld the kneeling Ellen with her clasped hands raised to Heaven, as she fervently ejaculated: "Merciful God! I thank thee!"

I turned to the beautiful wreck that lay extended upon

that rude cot—like one in a dream, I took those small and burning hands in my own—I looked long, and with bewildered earnestness in that too lovely, and ah! too sadly altered face—was it—could it be, the lost, the mourned—our own idolized *Evelyn*?

“Oh! my sister—mine own dear sister—have we found you at last?” exclaimed Ellen encircling the unconscious invalid with her arms, while tears at once of rapture and of anguish chased each other down her cheeks.

But even these words could not at that moment arouse me, for I was stupefied with wonder and horror. I could not turn my eyes away—they were transfixed, as by some spell, upon that beloved and familiar countenance. Yet the face had its perfect oval—the features were pined and thin, and the chiselled lips, more sculpture-like now, than they were colorless. The redundant tresses had been severed from the head, but the hair still curled in short round circles about that pale forehead—and ah! the eyes—those superb eyes—there was the saddest change—I had so often beheld them beaming with the radiant light of joy—and now they were hollow, glossy, and their expression had all the wildness of insanity.

“*Evelyn*—sister—do you not know me? Only speak to me one word!” said Ellen, imploringly.

Evelyn gazed with a vacant look from Ellen to me, and from me to Ellen again. She evidently did not recognize us; and Ellen’s words fell upon an unconscious ear. In another moment *Evelyn*’s wandering gaze rested upon the little pink shoe which Ellen held. A heavenly smile illumined the sufferer’s countenance—she stretched out her hand for the token, which Ellen gently resigned.

“Lilla! mine own—my beautiful angel! Ah! you have come again—I thought you would come no more! Lie there—lie there—from paradise—stolen away to lie down beside—wretched—yes—” Her utterance was impeded.

Ellen wept so violently that I forced her from the bedside, and entreated her to compose herself. When we

returned to the cot, Evelyn's mood had changed. She hid her face in the sheet as we approached, and cried out: "They shall not see me—they shall not—I will hide—hide, till the kind earth itself hides me, and they heap it in a mound upon my poor, aching breast! That was Miss Katerine's voice, and there is Ellen—Oh! I know them, but they shall not see me, for it would kill them both; and Walter too—but he is dead already—and I dare not die, lest I should meet him! That would be too horrible!"

"Evelyn! Evelyn! we know you—we love you as tenderly as ever—we always *shall* love you—look up, my own sister—look up, and speak to us!"

Ellen, as she said these words, drew the covering from her sister's face. Evelyn made no resistance, and though she gazed at us with apparent calmness, we were still unrecognized.

"We have no time to lose, Ellen," whispered I. "We must send for medical aid."

"Yes, yes! that we must, and quickly. And pray, send for Walter, and for mother and father at the same time. Ill as she is, it will be so much joy to them to know that we have found her. Oh! if she only recovers, we may all be so happy again! Send for Walter first, but prepare him well, or he may lose his reason from very rapture—I almost think mine is going."

"We had better not summon them yet—not quite yet"—I replied, at a loss how to account for my reluctance to concede to her wishes. "A physician is the most important person."

"True, we will send for Dr. R. And why not for Walter at the same time! Good news should travel like lightning."

"But Ellen—yield to me in this, dear Ellen. I have reasons for not sending either for Dr. R., or for Walter, and I will explain them to you by-and-by. Dr. Westley is an excellent physician, and he is not acquainted with Evelyn, or with you, although he has known me for some years—we will send for him."

I did not wait to obtain Ellen's consent, but re-enter-

ing the shop, despatched Nancy to the nearest grocer's for some paper. She soon returned with a soiled and crumpled sheet, upon which I scrawled with my pencil a few lines to Dr. Westley.

The note, despatched by Nancy, I returned to the chamber, where Ellen was supporting her newly found sister in her arms—weeping over her, and kissing the white forehead that rested upon her own shoulder.

I immediately suggested that we should disrobe Evelyn and place her more comfortably in bed. She was so light that I easily lifted her in my arms, and she was soon disencumbered of her sombre dress. Her under garments were worn and made of coarse materials, but on searching the room we could not discover that she possessed any other supply. I placed her upon a chair, supported by Ellen, while I essayed to render the wretched bed more comfortable; but the mattrass was made of straw, and the pillows were small and hard—and these—these were to hold the delicate limbs of the tenderly-nurtured Evelyn.

We had hardly laid her in the bed, and removed the blanket from Nancy's own cot to afford Evelyn sufficient covering, when Nancy herself returned, accompanied by Dr. Westley. Dr. Westley greeted me without evincing any surprise; he evidently thought that he had been summoned to visit an ordinary patient, and one belonging to the class which he was likely to find in such a dwelling. But Evelyn's appearance could not be mistaken—the marks of gentle blood were too many and undisguisable—the Doctor saw at a glance that some strange accident must have thrown her in her present situation; but he had too much professional discreetness to be inquisitive.

“She will certainly recover, Doctor, will she not?” inquired Ellen anxiously, as Dr. Westley felt Evelyn's pulse.

“I hope so,” replied the Doctor, but I fancied that he spoke in no very encouraging tone.

“Do you think that she has lost her reason?” I ventured to ask.

“No, I think not;” was the gratifying reply. “She is merely delirious from the effects of fever, and if it can be overcome, I have no doubt that her mind will be perfectly restored.”

This was joyful intelligence, for which both Ellen and I warmly breathed our thanks.

Dr. Westley wrote a prescription, recommended that the patient should be given some cool, refreshing drink as often as she thirsted, and left us, promising to call again the next morning.

“We must not leave her, Miss Katerine,” said Ellen, when the Doctor was gone. “We must remain here all night—and had you not better send for mother?”

I reflected a few moments, and then replied: “I think it best, Ellen, not at present to mention that we have discovered Evelyn’s retreat—best for many reasons. She cannot now bear a removal to more commodious lodgings, and the presence of her parents and husband cannot do her any good—then—her history—perhaps she would like to recount what has occurred to us—that is, perhaps—at all events, I am convinced that it would be better for us to nurse her in secret, and when she recovers, then——”

“Then we shall all be so happy again!” exclaimed Ellen, interrupting me.

“If Heaven so please.”

“But where are you going?” demanded she, as I took up my hat.

“I must return home, but I will be with you again shortly.”

I sent Nancy to procure me a cab, for it was already too dark for me to walk home; and giving one more look at Evelyn’s dear face, bade her sister adieu.

At home I found Mrs. Willard in *the fidgets* at our absence. When I informed her that the person whom Ellen went to see was so ill that one of us, at least, must remain with her all night, she angrily expressed her discontent, and asked what was to become of our school if we intended to hire ourselves out as hospital nurses for all the paupers in the city. I replied that our pupils

should not be neglected, and left her railing at the folly of poor folks pretending to charity.

After preparing a large pitcher-full of tamarind water, which is a most grateful beverage in cases of fever, I tied a pair of linen sheets, a couple of pillows and of blankets, a white wrapper of my own, and an ample supply of under garments, in one large bundle. Then calling Netta, with her assistance, carried the bundle to the street door. The cab had not been dismissed, and the bundle was placed upon the front seat. I then went into the kitchen to see Blanche, who was preparing tea with more activity than usual, gave a few necessary directions to Netta, and taking the pitcher in one hand, and a paper of biscuits in the other, re-entered the cab, and twenty minutes more brought me to Nancy's door.

Ellen did not expect to see me so soon, and when I opened the door I found her in the attitude of prayer, pouring forth the thanks of a grateful heart, and supplicating Heaven to perfect our happiness by restoring her sister to health.

Ellen rose at the sound of my step, and said: "Move gently, I think she sleeps."

But she was in error; Evelyn was lying with her eyes open, though she was composed and silent.

The pillows I had brought were placed beneath her head and shoulders, and as she made no objection to this, I lifted her once more in my arms while Ellen hastily spread the linen sheets and blankets on the bed. I was unwilling to disturb the sufferer more than possible, yet I knew that fresh garments were so conducive, not only to the comfort but to the positive restoration of an invalid, that with Ellen's assistance her sister was soon robed in the clothes that I had brought. When we replaced her in bed she drank with avidity a glass of the tamarind water, and soon fell into a sort of half sleep.

The night had grown cold, it had commenced to rain, and the piercing wind that shook the windows made us feel cheerless.

Billy was in the shop counting his day's earnings by the light of a dim tallow candle, and I despatched him

for a small quantity of wood, some sperm candles, and a paper of tea. The active little fellow was not many minutes absent, and on his return Nancy lighted one of the candles and kindled a fire in Evelyn's chamber, while I took possession of the broken teapot which was standing upon the table. Fortunately the kettle over the fire contained boiling water, and I had soon the happiness of carrying Ellen a refreshing bowl of tea, with the biscuits which I had brought on purpose for her. She at first refused to partake of any food, for her heart was too full, but when I whispered, "You must take care of yourself, Ellen, or you will not long have strength to nurse our beloved patient," she drank the tea and forced herself to eat a couple of biscuits.

The light from the blazing logs lit up the little room, and as it fell upon Evelyn's face showed a smile playing about her lips—and our hearts grew warm and hopeful.

Ellen embraced me, murmuring, "She is found! is not that a joy? She will recover soon—we shall be so happy!" and my heart echoed the hopes of her's.

It was now time for me to leave her, for I knew that if I hoped to be able to watch beside Evelyn on the next night, and relieve her sister, I must seek rest. Bidding Ellen a hasty adieu, and Evelyn a not less tender, but silent one, I re-entered the cab, and returned home.

Once more in my own chamber, prudence dictated that I should instantly seek my couch; but I knew that I could not sleep, until I had wearied myself, and unburthened my heart by writing to you! I am surprised at my own self-possession throughout this eventful day; it seems to me as though I had not repressed merely, but *postponed* the indulgence of my feelings. I dare not give way to them, lest I should be unfitted for action; and there is much, oh! how much for me to perform!

* * * * *

March 4th.

My letter has become a diary, and as such I will render it a faithful one. But let me forewarn you that I have only time hastily to note events, not to remark upon

them. I leave you to draw conclusions, for *my* mind is wholly engrossed with the actual occurrences.

Yesterday morning my toilette was made by candle-light. On its completion I awoke Netta, and told her that I was going to her mother's, but would return before breakfast. The affectionate little creature begged that I would bring Miss Ellen home with me, for she said she knew she was badly off where she was, and wouldn't have a decent thing to eat or drink. I assured her that Ellen's wants should be supplied, and that she would return home very shortly.

The storm still raged, and the keen March wind would, at that early hour, have given me an ague fit, had not excitement imparted a degree of warmth at once to my mind and physical frame. I stole noiselessly from the house for fear of awakening Mrs. Willard. Protected from the wet and the beating rain by India-rubber shoes and a huge umbrella, I took my way to the cars; for my purse will not afford me the indulgence of a cab any oftener than is absolutely necessary.

It was so early that the first morning car had not started when I arrived. I was obliged to wait a tedious half hour in the office, subjected to the rude gaze of the sleepy drivers, and the inquisitive glances of the conductors. At last the horses were attached, and the conductor handed me into an empty car. I took my seat beside the little stove, and its warmth reanimated me. At any other time the anthracite coal which they burn in these stoves would have been unendurable.

It was scarcely light when I stepped from the cars, but the rain had almost ceased, and I had only a short distance to walk before I was at Nancy's door. She was arranging the various articles in her little shop when I entered, and Dan was trying to kindle a fire with some moist wood which obstinately refused to burn, but persisted in smoking. I interfered with his labours, lest the smoke should injure Evelyn, and gave him money to procure more suitable fuel.

I could not wait to listen to Nancy's hopes, fears, and apologies, for not doing better by Miss Ellen; but,

escaping from her volubility, entered the sick chamber. Ellen was sitting beside the bed, with her head leaning upon her hand, and her mild, loving eyes fixed upon her sister. Those eyes were not heavy, nor did Ellen's face betoken any weariness.

Evelyn lay with her hands clasped upon her bosom, and I noticed the little pink shoe peeping out between the snowy fingers. Her eyes were open, but their wandering gaze, and the brilliant spot on each cheek, proclaimed that her fever had not abated.

Ellen started on seeing me, and said, "Is it so late? or are you here very early?"

"It is quite early," I replied; "but I fear, my sweet Ellen, that you have had a wretched night?"

"Wretched? Oh! no — I could not be wretched when I remembered that I was sitting beside Evelyn — Evelyn whom I had longed and prayed once more to behold — even for a moment! The night has been short, and yet it seems to me as if I had lived over my whole past life, since I last saw you! Every action — almost every thought — has risen before me as distinctly as though I had viewed it in a magic glass. What a different being I am from what I was when you first knew me! How much happier I am even in the midst of trial! How much I owe to you!"

"Your five talents have indeed brought forth ten, Ellen; but you owe this good work, not to the instrument by which it was wrought, but to the Artificer whose gracious hand guided the instrument. Not to me, but to Heaven! But how is Evelyn? Has she slept?"

"Not much — and she has talked very incoherently. She appears to be quiet now, but she does not yet recognise me!"

"I shall make a very short stay now, Ellen, for our little school must not be neglected. I will be with you again in the afternoon, and then you must give up your seat at Evelyn's side to me — to-night I must watch by her."

"No, no, indeed, Miss Katerine; you must not ask me to do that. I am not in the least wearied, and I could not endure to trust my poor sister even to your care."

“But, Ellen, it is absolutely necessary that you should seek rest. True affection, that is, *wise affection*, requires of you some self-denial. To-morrow morning you may again resume the duties of nurse, and I will attend to the school throughout the day.”

After some further persuasion, Ellen yielded, although unwillingly, to my request. It was time for me to leave, but I could not tear myself away without parting the rich locks from Evelyn's forehead, and imprinting a kiss upon her hot brow. She sighed gently at the touch of my lips, and for a moment her features contracted with a painful expression; it passed away, and left them more mournful in their composure than I had before beheld them.

While I was standing in the outer chamber giving Nancy a few directions about the food which she was to prepare for Ellen, Billy made his appearance. He threw down his oil-silk cap, and shaking the water from a jacket of the same material, carefully laid on a bench a large bundle of books, wrapped in their water-proof covering. Without noticing me, he greedily seized upon a bowl of bread and milk, which stood ready for him upon the table.

“Are you out as early as this, Billy?” said I, nodding as I passed his chair.

“Well, now, you don't say—that be'n't you, is it? *Da tell!* as the Yankee doddles say.”

“Have you been selling books at this hour?”

“Well, that's a rum question, to be sure! What else should I be doing out in all this here driving rain? I *guess* I've seen two steamboats off, and I *reckon* I've sold a bigger heap of books than you'd read in a month. Here—hold on, hold on a moment!” shouted he, perceiving that I was opening an umbrella, preparatory to my departure. “Let me show you—*perhaps* you'd be after buying a book or two.”

He seized hold of my dress, and dipped his spoon in the milk, stuffed a huge chunk of bread in his mouth, and before I could prevent him, he had unrolled the leather package, and was kneeling down in front of an

armful of books. He selected them out, one by one, and held them up before my eyes, always accompanying the action with appropriate critical eulogiums upon the work ; for young gentlemen of his profession are often far better acquainted with the merits of the author than those to whom the books are sold.

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Nine o'clock had struck; and my little pupils were raising an uproar in the school-room before I made my appearance among them.

During the day, I made a great effort to concentrate my mind upon my occupation, that I might do justice to the children; and I trust that I partially succeeded. But how could I see Ellen's empty chair, and prevent my thoughts from wandering to the bedside of her insensible sister? And how could I still the throbbings of my heart when I remembered that perhaps that sister, once more restored to health and happiness, would again grace her now deserted home, and rejoice and relighten the oppressed heart of her forsaken husband!

The school was dismissed, and dinner was over, and with a light step I sought my chamber, and prepared myself to join Ellen. I had just laid my cloak, shawl, and fur tippet upon the bed, when I was summoned to the presence of a visitor. In the parlor, I found my old friend Mrs. Ashburton and her daughters: three well-bred and neatly attired young ladies, whom she presented to me as my future pupils. My little school had doubled itself in a day! This was encouraging. Mrs. Ashburton's visit was not short, for she delights to talk over the "days of auld lang syne,"—and found in me a seemingly patient listener.

I smiled with ill-concealed pleasure when she rose and bade me good afternoon. Conducting her to the door, I was about to close it after her, when whom should I behold standing at the wicker gate of the courtyard but Mr. Merritt! This was the first visit that he

had paid us, and many united causes rendered his presence agitating and unwelcome.

I tried to veil my emotion by talking about our new residence, showing him the rooms, and conversing on indifferent subjects; but we were mutually embarrassed, and made some speeches much too ridiculous to bear repetition.

I sent for Mrs. Willard; and her presence was a relief to both of us, for she commenced a detailed account of her grievances, which precluded the necessity of all other conversation. Mr. Merritt looked wretchedly; he had evidently paid us this visit because he feared that his absenting himself wholly from his wife's family might give rise to slanderous reports. I longed to mention Evelyn—to inspire him with the hope of beholding her again—but dared not; and her name is a forbidden word upon his lips.

Fortunately, he refused Mrs. Willard's invitation to remain to tea; but it was so dark when I found myself at liberty, that I was obliged to defer my visit until Mr. Willard returned from his employer's counting-room. Mrs. Willard would have opposed my departure, but I told her that I was going for Ellen, who would accompany her father home; to this she merely answered that "it was high time."

Ellen had grown somewhat anxious at my non-appearance; though she could not help rejoicing that the period during which she could remain with her sister was prolonged.

A slight change had taken place in Evelyn, and Dr. Westley had assured Ellen that it was a favourable one.

"Your father is waiting, Ellen," said I, "you must hasten home."

"Must I, indeed? You cannot think how I dread to leave her! I almost feel as though I should never behold her more—as though we should lose her again!"

"If any change for the worse takes place, I will send for you—only hasten now."

"And in the morning I am to return?"

{ hundred thousand) looked smilingly upon me, my case }
 was not desperate. In a word, two weeks after my }
 Wall-street divertisements, the charming Amy had pro- }
 mised to be—and I had promised to make her—my wife! }
 The latter for the consideration of a ready hundred thou- }
 sand, to be doubled when the old man kicks the bucket. }
 You will rail at my having sold my liberty at so cheap }
 a rate, but necessity has no law.

Seriously speaking—and seriousness in me on this }
 subject is at present becoming—Amy is a lovely young }
 creature, as pure as a snow-drop and as warm as a sun- }
 beam;—and, unluckily for herself, far more constant. }
 She has decidedly grown prettier since her affections }
 have been developed, and the different phases which her }
 tenderness assumes, divert me. Her color comes and }
 goes like the shadow of a willow branch waved in the }
 wind. She is decidedly winning in her sweetness, but }
 the purest honey cloyes the soonest. I feel a *want* in her }
 presence, which at once dissipates the charm which her }
 sex generally weave about themselves. You remember }
 the Bard of Avon sings:

“ Things done are done, joy’s soul lies in the doing.”

{ And Amy’s heart once gained, there is nothing more to }
 ask or accomplish—nothing to discover—no feminine }
 mysteries to unravel—no tantalizing coquetry to provoke }
 interest. She is all candor, and all devotion. She ac- }
 knowledges her love without a blush, and as though the }
 avowal were made from an instinctive impulse of the }
 heart. She yields her very soul up to me, and courts no }
 gaze of admiration, cares for no word of praise, asks no }
 caress, listens to no adulation but mine. She would have }
 made an admirable wife for Cæsar—*sans pæur et sans* }
reproche—but your humble servant prefers a little more }
eau de vie in his milk-punch.

Yet, after all, it matters little; for did she possess the }
 charms of an Aspasia, and were her lures superior to }
 those of the wily Cleopatra, I could not love by compul- }
 sion. Like Sardanapalus, I could not hug the chain }
 which duty bade me wear. My love must be untrain-

armful of books. He selected them out, one by one, and held them up before my eyes, always accompanying the action with appropriate critical eulogiums upon the work ; for young gentlemen of his profession are often far better acquainted with the merits of the author than those to whom the books are sold.

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“What would you do, Blanche?” asked I, in accents of horror. “Give your purposed deed a name; that you may reflect upon its enormity. Would you commit *homicide*? Would you *murder*?”

“Hush! Do not speak that dreadful word! But I must do it if justice places the steel in my hand—if my father cries out to me from his tomb to strike—if by the blow I shall save her from being what I am!”

“Listen to me, dear Blanche; Retribution belongs to heaven, and not to mortals—Justice never demands vengeance from our hands—it is your disordered imagination which makes you fancy that you hear your father’s voice. Think you, that he, knowing your wretchedness in this life, would seek to render your state more dreadful hereafter by bidding you to commit so horrible a crime?”

“But think of her—shall he break her heart as he broke mine, and shall I not stretch out my feeble hand to save her?”

“You may be mistaken in your fears. But if not, would that authorize your becoming a murderess? But I am sure, I am very sure that you are mistaken.”

“Ah! tell me that again! Tell me that he does not love another! I could forgive him—I could lie down and die at his feet if he only loved me still! I could not live, and know that he loved another—that he breathed in her ear the thrilling words that he poured into mine—it was that thought that maddened me again!

“I am very sure that your suspicions are groundless,” repeated I, and the poor creature’s gratitude could not find expression in words. When I beheld her thus softened, I thought that this was a favorable moment to extract from her a vow which would perhaps make her forget her former one. I lifted the little Bible from my desk, where it usually lay, and taking her hand, placed it solemnly upon the sacred book.

“Blanche! I ask one token of gratitude and of love from you! With your hand upon this holy book, promise me that you will never attempt the life of—of the one who so deeply wronged you!”

Blanche looked up, her features beaming with grateful tenderness, and uttered the words, "I promise!"

A mountain seemed removed from my heart; and tears of joy flowed fast upon the book which I clasped between my hands as a pledge that his life was secure.

Blanche aroused me by saying, "You weep too, and I love you for weeping; for what can I do but weep? Two vows! I have made two vows! One to my father, and one to you! I must not take his life—no, no, I would not have had courage! I should have thrown my arms about him, and placed the dagger in his hand; he bade him finish his work, and kill me. I never could have harmed him!"

"Yet my vow to my father—revenge—I must be revenged! Not kill him—yet be revenged—and save her! Oh, what a frightful thought shoots through my brain! He shall lose the power to charm and to betray!"

Before I could reply, Mrs. Willard, attracted by our voices, entered the room. Blanche, who instinctively shuns her presence, instantly stole away, and as soon as I had succeeded in quading rather than answering Mrs. Willard's questions, I also withdrew.

I felt certain that I could trust Netta, and summoned her to my chamber. After some prefacing remarks, I cautiously told her that I feared Blanche was not at all times in her right mind, and that I depended upon her, (Netta,) to see that Blanche did no injury to herself, and to be particularly watchful in preventing her from leaving the house alone.

Netta was flattered by the confidence which I reposed in her, and promised implicitly to obey my orders. She has intelligence beyond her years, and relying upon her fidelity, I shall henceforth feel more at ease in absenting myself from home.

March 11th.

A note from Ellen brought to me by Billy! My hand is almost too tremulous to impart to you its contents. The hour when Evelyn's fate will be decided, has arrived

—anxiously as I have longed for this moment, I now shrink back, and would fain have the time postponed. Ellen, in her note, bids me hasten to her. She has just been informed by Dr. Westley, that the crisis is at hand. During the past night, Evelyn grew much worse—she has now sunk into a deep sleep, and upon her awakening, (so the doctor has declared,) her intelligence will be restored! And we may once more clasp her to our hearts, and call her ours, or she will almost instantly pass to that happier land where Lilla has gone before her!

We should—we must submit to the decree of heaven—^{ar's} if she is summoned away, duty forbids us to murmur at God's mandate—but, Oh! how difficult is it to bend and say, "thy will be done!" I cannot force my stubborn lips to utter any sound, but "spare her—spare her to us!" All my self-possession has vanished—my quietude has passed away—I am unnerved—I hold up my hands supplicatingly, and dare not meet the stroke!

Evelyn, in the meridian bloom of her beauty—at the height of her uninterrupted joyousness, rises before me! I see her innocent face as it looked when the folds of the bridal veil fell round it—I see it, in its superb beauty, when she personated Gulnare in the tableaux—again in the calm purity which rendered loveliness more lovely as she lay upon her couch, with the new-born infant clasped in her twining arms—I behold that same fair countenance as it now appears, worn, emaciated, with the burning glow of fever on the cheeks, and the fearful light of insanity in the still brilliant eyes—and then—ah! then methinks I gaze upon it as it lies within the coffin's narrow bounds, whiter than the circling shroud—colder than our paralyzed hearts! God grant that she may live—live to learn something more of his mercy—of his goodness—of those holy and spiritualizing truths to which in the noon-day of happiness she had not time to give a thought!

* * * * *

Night—March 19th.

I can find no relief for my overfraught heart but in

my pen. Ah! Elizabeth, through what terrible scenes have I passed since I traced the last lines which darken this sheet! I have been oppressed by a mid-day nightmare. Would that I had only dreamed—that I could awake, and say, “thank God! it is but a dream.” But I will not anticipate; I will pass again, and quietly, through the scenes which have just wrung my heart, that you may as calmly follow me.

Yesterday was Friday, and on receiving Ellen’s note, which reached me at about ten o’clock in the morning, I instantly dismissed my pupils, at the risk of displeasing their parents. Before I joined Ellen I wrote a few lines to you, as much to compose my mind as for any other reason. I was a little calmer when I laid by my pen, and before I passed Nancy’s threshold I had schooled my heart into a tolerable degree of resignation.

When I entered the humble dwelling, Ellen was sitting in her usual seat near her sister. Johnny, Nancy’s youngest child, lay on her knees. She had just hushed the noisy little urchin to sleep, for she feared that the sound of his merry shouts might disturb the dearer slumberer.

The hectic hue on Evelyn’s cheek had almost entirely faded away, and those cheeks looked more sunken in their pallor. Her silken curls clung in matted masses to her damp forehead, and a cold moisture bedewed the hands clasped above her head. Her breath came regularly, but very slowly from between her parted lips, and a peaceful smile rested upon that once roseate mouth.

Ellen’s eyes were red and swollen, but their expression, as they met mine, betokened an unwavering hopefulness. We neither spoke, but the mutual pressure of our hands, as we sat side by side, said more than words. In about half an hour, during which Evelyn remained in the same position, I rose gently and retired to Nancy’s apartment. Ellen made me a signal to carry the child with me, and placed it in my arms. Luckily the little fellow did not wake, and I had the gratification of laying him with sealed lids upon his mother’s bed.

I was stooping over the fire preparing some bread

jelly, a most nutritious restorative, which Evelyn might possibly need when she woke. Nancy was engaged in washing the kitchen utensils outside of the door. As I was in the act of removing the jelly from the fire, Ellen approached me on tiptoe.

"Come in;" whispered she; "she has turned on her side; I think she is waking."

We re-entered the small, close chamber together. In almost breathless silence we stood beside the bed.

Evelyn's fingers moved uneasily; the little slipper, which she had not relinquished throughout her illness, fell from her hands; the faintest peach-blossom hue tinted her cheek; her breath grew less even; she sighed gently, and slowly opened her eyes!

Intelligence, hope, tenderness, beamed from those clear, blue orbs as they languidly gazed around the room, and then rested upon Ellen's face and mine. With a sudden effort, Evelyn raised herself in the bed, and extended her arms towards us, exclaiming in a faint, but thrilling voice—"Sister—Miss Katerine—Oh! is it you—is it you?"

An irrepressible cry of joy burst from Ellen's lips as she threw herself forward to meet her sister's offered embrace. But Evelyn was seized with a cold tremor; her brow contracted as though some frightful thought were shooting through her brain; she shudderingly evaded Ellen's caress, and buried her face in the pillow.

"Thank God! God in heaven be thanked! she will recover; the crisis is past!" ejaculated Ellen. "You are restored to us, dear, dear Evelyn—loved sister—thank God!"

She attempted to encircle her sister's neck with her arms. But Evelyn pushed her away, and said in a tone full of anguish,

"Do not touch me; do not call me sister; I am nothing to you now. No kiss; no word of love; no hope; there is none, none left for me!"

Ellen was mute from horror, but my strength had returned. I bent over the sorrowing Evelyn, and said: "You recognise us, Evelyn, do you not? It is Ellen

and your friend whom you once loved. You can never be otherwise than dear to us!"

"You do not know—you do not know what I am!" she ejaculated in a broken voice. "You would shrink from me; you would not breathe the same air; the very atmosphere I breathe is polluted! Do not come near me—you are innocent—and I—Great God! *I* was innocent once!"

Ellen grew so pale as these words struck her ear, that I feared she would faint. I touched her arm, and whispered, "If you love her, calm yourself! Her life may be risked if you show any emotion. I conjure you to be calm, or to leave us!"

Then turning to Evelyn I said, "What you were, and what you may be now, cannot alter what you *are and always must be to us*, beloved Evelyn! We will mourn with you, and pray for you, but never, never forsake you!"

"Miss Katerine! Miss Katerine!" was all she could utter, but her arms were about my neck and her head upon my bosom; and my tears mingled with those that streamed from her eyes as she again and again returned the kisses which I imprinted upon her lips.

Ellen stood beside us like one deprived of sense and feeling by some sudden shock; her dreams for the future were dispelled; her hopes were dashed to the ground—yet the cause of this sickening dread was undefined; she was appalled, yet scarcely knew why. I made her a sign to embrace her sister. She obeyed me almost mechanically.

"You too, Ellen, you too forgive me—though in the wide world you and Carissima only can ever pardon! If galling tears—if hours of misery, of unutterable misery—if remorse more poignant than the pangs of a torturing death—if ceaseless prayers, and unremitting agony could wipe away that foul stain, my soul would be purified!"

"And will be, Evelyn! when rationality returns with restored health, and your life proves that your penitence is sincere."

"But you have not heard all that I can tell you. You cannot know how culpable, how lost I am! But do not judge me until you hear all; and you, Ellen, with what mournful eyes you look upon me! But you do not turn away; you will not spurn me when you know the worst? You will never forsake me? At least I shall have you two left in this world: I shall not be quite alone in my wretchedness!"

"To us—you will ever be the same to us." Ellen's voice trembled as she spoke these words, and they were evidently pronounced with much difficulty.

"You must be composed, Evelyn," said I. "A relapse might be fatal, and this excessive excitement will produce bad consequences. I have some nourishment prepared for you, and you must speak no more until you have been refreshed."

"Ah, you are so kind! But I cannot eat; I need no food; and I cannot rest until I have told you everything; for then, perhaps, perhaps you will loathe me too much to let this dear hand lie in mine as it now does. Well you may; I loathe myself; I grew phrenzied because I could not fly from my own thoughts. Memory tortured me until I would have died to escape those fearful recollections; but I felt that they were branded upon my soul, and that I should eternally carry them with me. But hear me now, for I must tell you all."

"Not until you are stronger, Evelyn;" said I, placing my finger upon her lips. "When you have eaten, then we will listen to you. Nay, not a word; you must yield."

And she did yield, without a remonstrance. I laid her head again upon the pillow, which Ellen kindly smoothed; and leaving the sisters together for a few moments, returned to Nancy's room for the jelly. It was quickly prepared, and Ellen supported her sister while I placed the spoon to her lips, replenishing it as often as it was emptied. When she had swallowed a few spoons full of the jelly, she shook her head and refused to receive more.

"Can you not sleep now?" I inquired.

"No, no, not now—not until my mind is unburthened. Yes, Ellen, raise me up higher; support me; it is so sweet to be supported in your dear arms. How long, how long it is since they have twined about me! And you, Carissima, let me hold your hand? And, if you can help it, do not draw it away until I have done? But no—turn your eyes from me—I shall not have courage to speak if you look at me with such pitying glances."

We complied with her requests, and she commenced the sad history which I shall now relate to you. That mournful recital is so indelibly impressed upon my memory that I have not forgotten one word; and her musical but touching tone is even now sounding in my ears.

"Carissima," she began, "you remember that dreadful day when Laura sent for me at Mr. Fleecer's, and I met you as I was escaping from her presence?"

I bowed my head in token that the day to which she alluded was not forgotten.

"In that interview Laura accused me—how shall I tell you—she said that all the world knew it—she reproached me with—she accused me of——"

Evelyn was unable to proceed, tears of agony choked her utterance.

"I overheard that conversation," said I, with assumed calmness. "She accused you of loving Colonel Damoreau; did she not?"

Evelyn assented by a sign, but her agitation was so excessive, that it was some moments before she could continue her narration.

"And I—I could not deny"—she sobbed out at length, "let me speak truly; that I loved, worshipped, had given up my whole soul to him! Her fatal questions made me, for the first time, vow to myself that I *did* love him beyond any other human being; beyond virtue, honor, the hope of Heaven; even better than my child—Lilla, my lost Lilla! I had long, but without ever examining my own heart, or analyzing my emotions, struggled with this passion in secret. For Colonel Damoreau gained an ascendancy over me, the very first moment that I beheld him. I felt myself irresistibly attracted towards him—

irresistibly bowed before him—it seemed to me as though I were the creature of his will—as though I lost my very identity in his! I earnestly, and in desperation and sickness of heart, warred against this uncomprehended feeling. I closed my ears to his moving voice, I shunned his dangerous presence, but the mysterious power he exerted over me was too mighty, I had not strength to resist. I listened to him again—I found no happiness except in his presence. I seemed to myself like a defenceless child battling with a giant.

“When I conversed with you, Carissima, then only was I inspired with superior energy and courage; it appeared as though you flung an armor of purity about me, and for awhile I was calmer, happier, for I could withstand the tempter’s fearful lures.

“Lilla was born, and love for her superseded all other affections—I thought I was saved! But I saw him again, my devotion for the child found a sympathizing echo in his breast; then you left me, and Laura—Oh! I cannot say how it was, but when I talked with Laura, my whole nature was changed. I was a slave to passion, and I believed that an unalterable destiny forced us to yield to the strongest dictates of our heart. I was most wretched, I enjoyed none of the comforts of home; I saw a thousand faults in Walter; I reproached myself, my parents, all of you for having permitted me to become his wife. I still adored his child and mine, but sometimes I was even wicked enough to think that I could not have loved it had it not been dear to Hubert—to Colonel Damoreau.

“You returned, and I shrank from your scrutinizing gaze, but I did not yet acknowledge to myself my own guilt. Let me hurry on; I cannot dwell upon the conflicting emotions which warred together in my heart when you conversed with me. I might have listened to your voice, but Laura was ever by my side, and the evil genius swayed my spirit and drowned the heaven-breathing tones of the good.

“Walter mistrusted me, and grew cold; and I began once to fear, and brave him, while a growing repug-

nance to his society rooted itself in my heart. When Laura's note reached me upon that dreadful day, Walter had just accused me of an unwifely demeanor, and though my conscience at the very moment rebuked me, I angrily retorted.

"I obeyed Laura's summons. You heard her dreadful words. She told me that I was criminal in the eyes of the world, and, oh, Heaven! she made me conscious how criminal I must indeed be in the eyes of God! My reproachful heart cried out that she spoke truth, and I left her with the half-formed determination of committing suicide to escape from the horrors of my situation. You encountered me as I was rushing from the house, but I broke away from your embrace. In the street I did not know which way to turn; I had hardly reason enough left to guide my steps; and then—then"—

"You returned home, did you not?" inquired I, observing that she was unable to conclude her sentence.

"Not yet, not yet—Oh! that I had! The first person whom I met was—Colonel Damoreau! Alas! if we had not met at that dreadful moment—perhaps, perhaps I might not be what I now am. He joined me—he saw my agitation—he entreated me to tell him the cause. I could not speak; my head swam, I hardly knew where I was; yet I remember that I clung to his arm; but when he tenderly pressed mine, I started from him, and would have fled. A warning voice whispered me that now was the fatal moment, the moment of imminent peril and of trial, that now, if I conquered, I would henceforth be free from the galling yoke which I was madly fastening about my own neck. He pursued me, and my steps faltered. We were again walking side by side.

"I cannot tell you, I cannot make you conceive with how much tenderness he soothed and re-animated me. I had grown feeble, and he offered his arm to support me, and guide my uncertain steps. I accepted it, and then, then, for the first time he avowed his passion! His words, his dangerous looks, his more dangerous tone—I can give you no adequate idea of them. All power had passed away from me, my very physical faculties

were prostrated, and I fainted in his arms. When consciousness returned, I was lying upon a sofa in a small chamber adjoining a confectioner's. My head rested upon Colonel Damoreau's bosom; his arms were about me; I could not move; I felt that thenceforth I was his! A young woman was standing beside us with a glass of water in her hand. He seized it, placed it to my lips, and then motioned her to withdraw. I trembled in every limb, yet I did not move from the position in which I lay, and I *felt* rather than saw his eyes upon me. Oh! Carissima, have you ever *felt* the glance of one you loved—is it not an appalling sensation?

“At last I started up, and said, ‘Let me go home! Let me go home!’

“He did not attempt to detain me, but respectfully rose and said, ‘You are very weak; had you not better rest upon this sofa until you regain your strength? I fear you are unable to walk.’

“He spoke truly, I was too feeble to hold myself erect, and sank powerless into a chair which was standing near. He placed himself beside me. He conversed with me long and earnestly. Can you believe that I was shameless enough to repeat to him my conversation with Laura Hilson? And he—I can hardly call to mind what happened, it was all so confused, so like a terrible dream; but he conjured me to fly with him from the home which was no longer dear; and in the most glowing and eloquent language pictured to me our future life.

“I must return home—let me go—I must see my child!” was all that I could reply.

“‘Not until you promise that you will meet me afterwards at Grammercy Park,’ he answered.

“Do not spurn me—do not hate me for it, for I was beside myself and knew not what I did—I promised!

“Almost in silence he conducted me home, but his looks and the mute pressure of his arm in which mine was linked, spoke more than words. We parted at our door.

“‘I will await you at the Park—you will come?’ said he.

“I could not reply, but the expression of my face contented him. The door opened and I entered the house. I flew to the nursery: I found Lilla asleep in her cradle. I dismissed her nurse from the room; and kneeling down beside the slumbering innocent, I tried to utter a prayer, but it died away upon my lips.

“The child had never looked so beautiful, had never been so inexpressibly dear to me; yet a mysterious power which had gained dominion over every act and thought, forced me, in spite of myself, to resign her. I lifted the sweet babe in my arms, and almost blistered her delicate face with my burning kisses. I knew—I was quite certain that those kisses were the last I should ever press upon her living brow. She woke, and I lulled her to sleep again and replaced her in her cradle. When I rose up, you were standing beside me, Ellen. In the most afflicting anguish of mind, I wandered about the room without regarding you. One of Lilla’s slippers was lying upon the bureau: I snatched it up—ah! what have you done with it? Where is it now?”

As she spoke she looked anxiously about her for the slipper: it was lying upon the bed-quilt; she clasped it in her hands, and continued:

“I took the slipper; it was most precious to me, for it was something of Lilla, and I could bear it away with me! I have worn it in my bosom ever since! Worn it upon that breast which was unworthy to cradle the angel God had given me!

“I then passed into your room, Ellen; I would fain have stolen away some remembrance of you. But you followed me, and the book that I had seized was returned to its place again. I left yours, and entered my own chamber; you still accompanied me; and, do you remember—no, you have not forgotten our embrace? That dear embrace almost shook my purpose; but I had taken the first fatal steps in the descent from virtue, and could not pause in my impetuous course. You left me at my own request; and, once alone, I became reckless again. I waited until I thought that you were busied in writing, and then stole from my chamber and from the

house—that once happy dwelling which was to be my home no more!”

Evelyn paused, and gazed with sorrowful eyes around the wretched room in which she was now lying, and a tear glistened upon her wasted cheek; but her calmness surprised me.

Ellen and I had listened with breathless attention to her recital; and it was a relief to us that here, at the most dreadful portion, her silence gave us an opportunity of recovering ourselves.

For some time Evelyn seemed lost in thought, but the light pressure of my hand disturbed her.

“Yes, yes, I will hurry on; have patience, for it is very horrible. What was I telling you? Where was I? Now I remember; I stole from the house; I took nothing with me; no clothing, no jewels, nothing! They were Walter’s wife’s, and I had forfeited that name. Guided by some invisible hand, for I think I had never been there before, I hurried to the Park. Colonel Damoreau was waiting me, and a carriage stood near. I stopped when I saw him; my limbs refused to bear me on. With a joyful countenance he approached me. I did not even notice him by a look; I could not, I was wholly powerless. In the most tender language he accosted me; I still continued speechless and motionless. There was nobody near; he lifted me, unresisting, in his arms, and carried me to the carriage. When I recovered the use of my faculties, I found myself driven along at a rapid rate; his arm encircled my waist, and my head reposed upon his shoulder.—You shudder, Ellen; so did I—so do I now! But too late—too late!

“I was borne to the most magnificent abode; I was surrounded by a species of luxuriously tasteful elegance, such as the imagination might picture when we rise from the perusal of the Arabian Nights. My apartments resembled the halls of an enchanted palace, and the presiding genius every hour essayed to charm my eyes and ears with some new wonder. But Lilla’s small slipper still lay upon my breast, and seemed, in spite of these entrancing sounds and sights, to cut like a sharp instrument into my very heart.

"All my wants were supplied as if by magic. Though I had not brought a change of garment with me, on the second day after my departure from home I found myself mistress of the most complete, tasteful, and elegant wardrobe imaginable. How it had been provided so speedily, I could not divine.

"Colonel Damoreau often absented himself for hours, but during my solitude my ears were constantly enraptured by delightful strains of music, which proceeded from invisible minstrels. Portfolios of the choicest engravings were spread before me, and books—romances of the most pernicious character, were always at hand. I abandoned myself to the wildest excitement, for thus only could I banish thought; but happy—no, not for one fleeting moment was I happy! Even in the midst of my mad enjoyment, I realized that that word could never more be applied to me. The melodious strains jarred harshly upon my ears, for my heart was out of tune. My eyes were too often dimmed with tears, which never flowed, to delight in the most beautiful works of art. I could not read; the page before me was ever darkened with the relation of my own frightful history.

"Even Colonel Damoreau's fascinations, when most powerfully exerted, most torturingly increased my internal anguish. I could not fix my eyes upon his countenance without a pang; I could not hear his seductive voice without shuddering: my smothered sighs alone replied to his words of endearment. And, when he one evening attired himself in his pirate costume and threw himself at my feet, I lost the recollection of my guilt and my agony in insensibility.

"Yet I loved him—I had never loved before—but no—you, Miss Katerine, would not desecrate the name by calling a passion, so unholy, *Love!*"

"At the end of a fortnight, I had one night a fearful dream; I shall never forget it. I thought that I beheld Walter sitting beside Lilla's coffin. He was wofully changed, and the unutterable wretchedness delineated upon his countenance sent a chill of horror to my soul. While I gazed, a rebuking voice, which sounded like

yours, Katerine, whispered in my ear, "Behold thy work!" I awoke—but the vision haunted me, and I dared not close my eyes to sleep again.

"That morning, for the first time in my life, I reflected over my whole past existence. My follies, vices, and—yes, there were crimes too—they all stared me, like so many frightful spectres, in the face. When I thought of Colonel Damoreau, I remembered, or rather for the first time *realized*, the insidious arts by which from the days of our acquaintance he had assailed my honor. My eyes were opened. The more deeply I thought upon his character, the more I loathed and despised it—until I started up, exclaiming: 'How could I have ever loved him! Sensual, selfish, cold-blooded,—sacrificing the honor of one he loves, her temporal and eternal happiness, for his own transient gratification—Oh! how could I have ever loved him!'

"From that moment my passion was turned to scorn and indignation, not to hatred, for I despised him too thoroughly to hate. I dreaded his return. Never, never more could I endure to meet the grasp of his perfidious hand. But what was to become of me? Oh! if I could only have once more found myself at home, how much better a wife, how much worthier a mother I would have been! But that was impossible. My feet must never cross that threshold more. I had forfeited forever the sacred titles of wife and mother. I wonder that I retained my reason when I became certain of these terrible but unalterable truths. Alas! I was not so happy as to grow mad!

"Upon one step I instantly resolved, and that was to forsake Colonel Damoreau and abandon my present sinful course of life. But whither should I fly? How should I support myself? These questions I could not answer, but my determination remained unshaken.

I summoned the maid who daily attended upon me. She was a young, pale-looking girl, and her face plainly betokened that she had known sorrow. I thought that she would sympathize with my grief, and I was not mistaken. I gave her a slight sketch of my history (at

which she showed no surprise), and entreated her to bestow upon me a suit of her own clothes, that I might pass through the streets unknown.

“ ‘I cannot purchase them from you,’ said I, ‘for I am destitute of means.’ As I spoke, my eyes fell upon the jewelled rings glittering upon my hand. I always wore those rings, and when I left home I did not remember that they were upon my fingers. I drew off a costly diamond ring and begged her to accept it; she quietly refused, and answered that she would supply me with clothes without recompense.

“ I hastily attired myself in a suit of her coarse garments, and that I might be more perfectly disguised, cut my hair close to my head, and wore one of her caps.

“ All your beautiful hair—you cut it off yourself?” exclaimed Ellen involuntarily.

“ Why not, dear Ellen? I hated the very sight of it; it had too often been admired for my own peace.

“ So much did I dread Colonel Damoreau’s return, that, as soon as I was dressed, I ran from the house almost without thanking my kind assistant.

“ Once in the street, I could not forbear directing my steps to Union Park. I was soon within a few paces of my former home; but think of my grief, my horror and despair, when I beheld Dr. R——’s gig standing in front of the house. I was certain that it was Lilla whom he came to attend, and as certain that I should never more behold the babe I had so cruelly forsaken—never while its living lips could return the pressure of mine! I was fearful of being recognised; I dared not linger on the spot where centred all my hopes—if such a lost creature as I am could entertain hopes.

“ I turned away, and entered the first jeweller’s shop I could find. Unless I sold the rings upon my fingers, I could not obtain shelter or subsistence. I drew off ring after ring, and holding them towards the man, asked in a faltering tone at what price he would purchase them. The jeweller examined the rings, looked at me suspiciously, and demanded where I procured them. I could not reply; he repeated the question, at the same time

laying them upon the counter. I seized them up and darted from the shop. I dared not make another attempt to sell the jewels, yet it was absolutely necessary that I should dispose of them. I had heard Richard speak of pawnbrokers' shops, and knew that their sign was generally three golden balls. I was in the Bowery, and walked straight on, looking about me at every step. At last I beheld the wished-for sign, and, with my veil closely gathered over my face, entered a small, dark shop. A Jewish-featured old man was standing behind the counter. I showed him the rings, but my words must have been inarticulate. 'How much do you want to raise?' he enquired.

"'Whatever you will give,' was my whispered answer.

"'Well, I should think fifty dollars was a pretty fair loan upon them,' he replied.

"I knew that the diamond guard alone had cost twice that sum, but I had not strength to argue with the man. I nodded my head in token that I was satisfied, and he desired me to write my name in a book which was lying open on his desk. I took the pen, uncertain what name to give, and after some deliberation wrote—I do not remember what.

"He placed the money and a small certificate in my hand, and I was again in the street in search of lodgings. I wandered on until my limbs were tired, but I had not settled in my mind upon any mode of procuring the shelter so much needed. It had commenced to rain, and I was perfectly unprotected—but I heeded nothing external. Hardly knowing why, I turned down Spring-street, and before I had proceeded many steps the word "Boarding," engraved in large letters upon a brass door-plate, attracted my attention. I mounted the steps, and with trembling hands pulled the bell. The ring was answered by the mistress of the house herself. I explained to her my wishes, but she looked at me askance, and rudely said that they took none but respectable persons, and that she did not know whether or not she had accommodations for me.

"I was too miserable, and too ill, to feel offended at her remark; I do not know what I answered; but after asking a number of questions, she introduced me into a room which was to be my chamber. If you could have seen it, Ellen; if you could have seen the dark, uncleanly, miserable hole, partitioned off from a close garret, into which she ushered me! What a contrast to the splendid abode from which I had fled! Yet so humbled had I become through the consciousness of my crime, that I felt as if even this mean refuge was a better one than the guilty outcast deserved.

"My life in this new dwelling was indeed a wretched one, yet I had not courage to seek other lodgings. I was content to wait entirely upon myself, to take care of my own room, to supply my own wants; but, besides this, I was forced to join the family, a coarse, vulgar set of persons, at table. I begged to be excused from the latter penalty, for I was ill in mind and body; the few mouthfuls that passed my lips, I longed to swallow in solitude. But the mistress of the house would not consent to my wishes; she had no servants, she said, to wait upon folks who gave themselves airs, and I might do as others did or go without eating. I yielded, but often partook of only one meal a day."

"Did you not suffer from the want of clothes?" inquired Ellen.

"Fortunately, I discovered that one of the rooms in the second story was rented out to a third-rate dress-maker. I took courage to pay a visit to this woman, and gave her money to buy me a couple of black dresses, for I felt as though I ought to wear none of brighter hue. She did so, and afterwards made them for me—badly enough, to be sure, but that mattered little. Through the kindness of this humble and hard-working woman, I procured other clothes of which I was much in need.

"I dared not venture into the street during the day, for fear of meeting some of my former friends. Colonel Damoreau, above all others, I dreaded to encounter; for I could not rely upon my own self-possession in preserving my disguise.

“When it was dark, I stole from the house—but always to wander in the same direction: there was but one spot which my thoughts haunted by day, and where I lingered sometimes for hours together—it was by your door. I watched the lights which shone from the different windows half the night; I longed to hear the sound of some of your voices; I thought that I should be almost happy again if I but once heard Lilla shout as she so often did when I sprang about with her in my arms. But the doctor’s gig was always at the door; and long and eagerly as I listened, I never caught the sound of a familiar tone.”

“Were you not afraid to wander about alone at night?” asked Ellen, in a tone of sorrowful surprise.

“I was dead to all such fear: there was for me but one pleasure left in the world, and that was indeed a melancholy one. It was to sit upon the door-step of the house in which I had once ruled as mistress, and to listen to the lightest sounds which issued from within. I was often insulted, and sometimes even accosted by the watchman; but I heeded not this; I was near those most dear, although they knew it not, and I would suffer any indignity rather than be deprived of that sole remaining joy. One night the desire to behold my forsaken child grew so strong upon me, that I could no longer restrain myself. I knew that she slept with mother in the basement chamber; and after crouching a long time by the windows to catch even the sound of her breath, I seized hold of the shutters to tear them open. The noise I made brought me to myself and startled those within the chamber; for soon after somebody opened the door leading into the street, and I was obliged to escape.

“Lilla died. There was none to tell me that her pure spirit had departed, yet I knew that she was dead! For once I ventured forth in the day-time. I sought my usual haunt. The street-door was open, and many of the neighbours were issuing from the mansion of sorrow. Some of them wept, but my eyes were dry; the relief of tears was denied me. Despair gave me courage, and I once more passed through that long entry and entered

that well-known room. I could not tell who was present; I saw nothing but Lilla in her coffin!"

Evelyn paused again, and pressed her hand on her brow.

"At another time; tell us the rest some other time," said Ellen, with emotion.

"No, hear me now; I must make the effort; I have but little more to say. A long period after that most dreadful day was a blank to me. I believe that I was seized with some violent fever, and that the good dress-maker took care of me; but I have no distinct recollection of what passed. When I recovered, I was again forced to join the family at table. There is one part of my history to which I cannot bear even to allude. The person who sat next to me at meals was a young man, probably of dissolute habits; and——do not make me tell you—you can imagine what I would say——"

"He paid his addresses to you?" asked I, not because I thought that I had divined rightly, but because I shrank from making any other suggestion.

"Worse, worse; much worse. I was forced to leave the house. From fear of being traced by this infamous man, I made my escape in such haste that I could only gather up a small bundle of clothes to carry with me. I had grown so feeble, that I could not have walked with a tolerably large one. For a couple of hours, or more, I walked about the streets, not knowing whither to seek shelter. Suddenly I thought of Netta's mother. I knew in what street she lived, and I remembered her number. With her, at least, I should find protection. She had never seen me; and if I could only bribe Netta to secrecy, my retreat might remain undiscovered. But even after I was within sight of Nancy's shop, the fear of meeting Ellen, or you, Miss Katerine, or of Netta's betraying me, for a long time deterred me from entering.

"At last, wearied to death, and almost unable to support myself, I staggered into the shop. If Nancy herself had not caught me by the arm, I should have fallen; yet I retained sufficient possession of my senses to look

anxiously around for Netta. It was a relief to discover that she was not present.

“In a very confused manner I told Nancy what I wanted, and begged that she would hire me a room; offering to pay her a higher price than she usually demanded, if she would supply my wants herself and not permit any other person to come near me. She consented; and to my great joy accidentally informed me that Nettá was living with you. This was the first thrill of pleasure I had felt, oh! for how long. And you, Ellen—your charity had provided this home for me!

“I was taken ill; I feared, yet longed to die; my sins had been too great to be expiated even by the horrible sufferings which I had undergone.

“I do not know how long I had laid in this miserable little chamber, for I never left my bed, and days and nights passed on without my noticing them. One day I heard your voices in the adjoining room. Those loved sounds seemed to restore me at once to health and strength! I started up in the bed, my first impulse was to fly to you; the next moment I remembered my degradation—I could never more be claimed as wife, daughter, sister, friend. I fell back in an agony of grief and remorse; and for the first time, since my sweet Lilla’s death, I wept! Nancy entered the room, and begged that I would see you. More terrified than ever, I obstinately refused. Then I heard Ellen’s dear voice; she was persisting in seeing me. I tremblingly hid myself beneath the bed-clothes, and you entered my chamber. You know all that happened—know all, but my feelings—and those no language could paint.

“I passed a most wretched night after you left me. To remain here was impossible—the risk of your return was too great. I must again wander forth, a homeless outcast. I rose before day-break; sustained by my earnest desire to escape, I dressed myself, and once more made a bundle of the clothes I could find. I examined my purse—Nancy had been regularly paid—I had but six shillings left—I placed those upon the wash-stand—they were her due, and I parted with my last cent. I

cautiously opened my chamber-door; nobody was to be seen. With noiseless steps, I passed through the shop—fortunately the street door was unbarred, for I should not have had strength to draw the bolt. Billy had probably passed out before me. In another moment I was in the street again. The morning air revived and yet chilled me. My thin shawl was but a slight protection against the winter wind. I walked but a few blocks, when my strength began to fail. I found myself standing beside the steps of a market. Near the entrance sat an old woman selling vegetables; several bushel-baskets of potatoes stood in a half circle on one side of her. I tottered towards the woman, for her countenance was not repulsive.

“‘I am wearied to death, will you let me rest here?’” was all I could say.

“She made some answer which I could not hear, but took for an assent, and sank down upon a low footstool that stood amongst the baskets. They screened me from the gaze of the passers by, and the good woman filled a tin mug with water, and handed it to me. I could not take it, for my hands were too tremulous, but leaning forward, I drank and was refreshed. She looked at me, and shaking her head, muttered something to which I did not listen. I must have remained some hours in the same position, yet not wholly unconscious, for I remember that the filth, and offensive odours in the market sickened me, and the noise almost crazed my head.

In walking, I had dropped my bundle, and I now for the first time missed it. All at once I remembered, that I had not a farthing in the world; and that the worn and ragged garments which then enveloped my half-frozen limbs were the only ones I possessed. Suddenly a strange vision rose before me. I seemed to be looking in a mirror, and saw myself arrayed in my bridal robes, with the jewels sparkling in my hair, on my arms and bosom, and the costly veil floating about my richly clad limbs. Was it not strange that on that very marriage day I had beheld myself as I was now—clothed in rags and misery, and want depicted upon my faded and altered face?

Ah! why had I not thought of that warning vision before, and shunned the acts which could make it real?

"The old woman took hold of my arm, and in looking up, I saw several other women crowding around me, and curiously peering into my face. They addressed me in rude tones, one after the other, but I made no answer to their questions, I only said, 'I am rested, I will go home now.'

"Home! I had no home. I had brought disgrace and misery to the home which I might have gladdened. I should never more have a home, save that which the coffin offers even to the most abject.

"The woman seemed half-inclined to detain me, but I rose up and hurried away. As I left the market I heard one of them exclaim, "'Poor thing! I hope she hasn't brought it on herself; but I shouldn't wonder if she didn't deserve much pity from honest folks!'

"Even these low market-women despised me. Humble and mean as was their lot, they possessed the one inestimable jewel which placed them above me in the eyes of God as of man.

"Which way I turned, how far I tottered on, or how I came here, I cannot say. I recollect that soon after I left the market, I saw somebody who resembled Nancy, coming towards me—I remember nothing more. When consciousness again returned, you, beloved Ellen, and you, dear Miss Katerine, were watching by my side. But you did not then know my guilt. Perhaps you will never sit here again, but my heart is lighter now that I have told you all."

Alas! Evelyn did not remember that she had transferred the weight of her own heart to ours.

"You do not speak, Ellen—dear Miss Katerine," she continued, "you do not say that you will not cast me off! I do not deserve your pardon; I never again can possess your esteem; you must despise me, but not more than I do myself. I cannot be more guilty, and more degraded in your eyes than I am in my own."

I looked at Ellen—I longed to hear her speak, and console this true and suffering penitent; but the quivering lips of the unhappy girl could frame no words.

"Evelyn," said I, "you are as dear to me, and I think to Ellen also, as you ever were. You have sinned and suffered: when we are ourselves without sin, then shall we be worthy to judge you. That *cannot be*, and we leave it to God, who sees all hearts, to decide whether your penitence be real."

Evelyn turned her large blue eyes full upon my face, and the look she gave me will ever be garnered up amongst the precious things in my memory.

"And you, sister, will you love me still?" asked Evelyn.

"I never can help loving you;" was Ellen's tender but not calmly uttered reply.

Evelyn was evidently much exhausted, and I insisted that she should compose herself to sleep. She consented, but unwillingly. Ellen and I sat by the bed perfectly quiet until Evelyn's deep and regular breathing proclaimed that she slept.

I was the first to speak. "She will recover!" said I.

No glow of pleasure flushed Ellen's cheek. "Yes," she answered, "but——"

I finished her sentence. "But she cannot be to us what she has been. Is that what you would say, Ellen? And you speak truly, for she can be much more, and we can be far more to her. It will be our part to console, to advise her, to make her penitence real and lasting, and to point out the mode by which she may render it expiatory. We may now be her only friends, Ellen; for society will have placed its ban upon her. Those who have sinned in secret, and yet retained their proud station in the world, will be the first, with unabashed fronts, to fling the stone at our misguided Evelyn. But we must sustain her—we must not leave her friendless!"

"Oh! Miss Katerine, there is nothing under the face of heaven which I love so dearly as Evelyn—yet I cannot conceive, I cannot excuse to myself her infatuation and her error. Was there ever a tale so horrible as the one she has just related to us! And how could she have left her child? How could she have forsaken us?"

Was it possible that she could *forget* our terror and grief at her strange disappearance?"

"All thoughts were engrossed in one, dear Ellen, and—but do not think that I intend to palliate her fault—I only repeat that it is not for us to judge her."

Ellen said no more at that moment. After a pause of some duration, she asked: "Must we tell Walter? And father and mother, must they not know that Evelyn has been found?"

"I hardly know what to reply, Ellen, but I think that for the present we should keep our secret. Her imminent peril has passed, but Evelyn has by no means recovered. When she is once more restored to health, it will be time enough to decide."

"And Amy—poor Amy—she certainly must be told?"

"You are right, Ellen. It will be a dreadful blow to her, yet she must know the truth."

"And will *you* tell her? I could not bear to see her misery."

"Perhaps you might, if you remembered that she would be spared from greater misery. I dread the interview, but——"

The entrance of Dr. Westley prevented my concluding the sentence. We informed him that his patient had awakened, as he predicted, in her senses, and that she had conversed with us for a couple of hours.

"That was wrong, very wrong, and most hazardous," replied he. "She must be permitted to speak as little as possible. Her recovery depends upon her perfect quietude; and she must be kept free from all excitement."

He gently pressed his finger upon her pulse, and said, in a whisper, "The fever has returned, but in no great violence; if she has a relapse, we can entertain but little hope for her life."

These words seemed to arouse and alarm Ellen; all her former love and anxiety for her sister were reawakened; she seized the Doctor's arm, and said in an agitated tone, "Tell us what to do: we will follow, implicitly follow, your orders, Doctor—only save her! She must not die; save her, if it is possible!"

Dr. Westley looked at Ellen in surprise; and the expression of his face seemed to ask "How is it that she is so dear to you?" But he only answered, "I will do my utmost. At present more depends upon herself, and on her nurses, than upon me. She must be kept calm, and perfect quiet preserved about her. These are my only directions. If they are followed Nature will probably do the rest, for my patient is evidently very young and her constitution not seriously impaired."

The Doctor left us, and after his departure we did not even dare to converse in whispers for fear of breaking Evelyn's rest. At last she turned, and in a few moments more, slowly opened her eyes.

Her first words were—"It is true then—you *have* pardoned me? Oh! if I could only see mother!"

I would not permit her to say any more. The Doctor's orders were communicated, and Ellen joined me in entreating that she would obey them. Evelyn was now too debilitated to remonstrate, and she laid back upon the pillow and again closed her eyes; but not to sleep, for every few moments she opened them, and they were fixed with a loving expression upon our faces.

Thus passed the greater portion of the day. Towards dark, Ellen, at my urgent entreaty, returned home. When Evelyn found that I was alone with her, she made a second effort to speak, but I charged her, if she loved us, to remain silent. She again partook of the nourishment that I had prepared, and to satisfy her I also was obliged to eat.

When the evening was half spent, she said, "You must not sit up by me, I cannot sleep unless you are resting—indeed I cannot. Pray go to bed."

To argue with her would have been useless. I begged Nancy to prepare me a cot and place it by the side of Evelyn's. Nancy did so, and Evelyn's face wore a happy smile as I laid down near her.

In the morning Ellen came, provided with her work, and carrying a book in her hand. She proposed reading aloud to her sister, but this I would not permit for

fear of agitating Evelyn, or rendering her mind too active.

When I arrived at home Mrs. Willard had just finished breakfast: I remembered Evelyn's request to see her mother, but felt a repugnance to mention the subject at that moment. I have a duty towards Amy, too, to perform—but not to-day. I must rest, that I may gain strength.

CHAPTER XIII.

“Beauty hath no lustre
Save when it gleameth through the crystal web
That purity's fine fingers weave for it.”

MATCHIN.

From the Same to the Same.

March 15th.

My last letter was dated on Saturday. That evening Ellen remained with her sister. Mr. Willard was lying asleep upon the sofa, and I found myself sitting by the fire alone with Mrs. Willard. I had been teaching her a new stitch in knitting, and she had grown gay in recounting to me some of her favorite stories. She was decidedly in a softer mood than usual; her tone and manner regained something of the suavity of former days. We talked for awhile upon indifferent subjects, and then, thoughtful of Evelyn's request, I seized upon the auspicious moment to say:

“We never speak of poor Evelyn now. Could you ever satisfy yourself what had become of her?”

“No,” answered Mrs. Willard with a sigh; “I have sometimes made myself sick with imagining, but I never could arrive at any probable conclusion.”

Encouraged by the affection expressed in these words, I ventured to continue. "If some trace of her could be discovered, and if we should have reason to believe that owing to her youth, her inexperience, and the impetuous ardor of her character, she had been misguided—that she had been lured into the commission of——"

Mrs. Willard's eyes kindled, and she fixed them searchingly upon my countenance, exclaiming: "What do you mean? What then?"

"Had any such misfortune occurred," continued I, somewhat disconcerted by the scrutinizing look, "you would not refuse to see her again?"

"Never!" ejaculated Mrs. Willard, her eyes sparkling with indignation. "I would never behold her face, and never pardon her, though she were dying of want! If she had made the false step to which you allude, our present poverty, our present unhappiness and most deplorable situation, would be owing to her. She would have robbed us of all the comforts of life, and sacrificed our position in society, our pleasures, to feed her own disgraceful passion. No, I would never pardon her!"

"Not if she were penitent, ill, and humbled to the dust by affliction and the sense of shame?"

"Would all her humbling put bread in our mouths? I repeat, I would never pardon her. But what do you mean by this singular conversation? Have you really found any clue to Evelyn's disappearance? Yet do not tell me, if you have. I would rather believe that she was dead, than know that she lived and had disgraced herself and her family. If she has forgotten what was due to us and to her own position in the world, let her suffer as she deserves; she has brought all her troubles upon herself—I discard her for ever!"

It was useless to continue the conversation; Mrs. Willard's tone convinced me that her determination was unalterable, and I changed the subject.

On Sunday morning I omitted to attend divine service, that I might spend the day beneath Nancy's humble roof, with the two sisters.

Evelyn's first question on beholding me was: "Shall I see mother to-day? Oh, say yes!"

"You are not yet strong enough to undergo any excitement, dear Evelyn: remember the doctor's orders—you must be submissive."

"So I will be—pardon me! But let me see her as soon as you think that I am able to bear the interview. But tell her—"

I was forced to interrupt her. "At another time, Evelyn, you shall give me your message. You must not exert yourself to speak now. Ellen and I will talk to you without your replying. And, if you please, Ellen will read to you one or two chapters from the holy book I have just placed in her hands?"

Evelyn smiled her assent, and Ellen read Christ's Sermon on the Mount, in a tone so full of pathos, that the tears sprang to her sister's eyes. I observed them, and signed to Ellen that she had better close the book.

To change the current of Evelyn's thoughts before it became too agitating, I described to her our little school, our pupils, our mode of instruction, and the wonderful revolutions that we intended to effect. She listened with great interest, particularly when Ellen joined in the conversation. In this manner the morning glided away, varied only by short intervals of silence, during which Evelyn seemed to slumber. And Ellen and I sat, as we so often within the last fortnight had sat before, contemplating the lovely features before us, and watching the varied expressions that even in sleep by turns animated or distorted them.

Lovely they were still, although beauty had lost its lustre, for purity had been blighted by the mildew of sin. A woman's virtue has been compared to the hair of Sampson—in it lies her strength! Surround her with what fascinations you will, they are weak when this unparalleled charm is gone! So thought I, as I gazed on Evelyn's fair countenance; my spirit saddened by the thought that the future for her could yield little else but pain. And her own hands have sowed the seed from which she must reap these tares!

It was my turn to pass the night with Evelyn, but her sister insisted that I should transfer the charge to her; she could sleep where she was, and she preferred the narrow cot by Evelyn's side to her own comfortable little bed at home.

On Monday morning I despatched a note to Amy, requesting that she would call upon me at four o'clock that afternoon, as I particularly desired to converse with her. She sent me the following answer, which you may believe did not assist in lightening my spirits.

“Dear Miss Katerine,

I would come to you if I could, but I have been engaged all the day with a couple of mantua-makers, who are puzzling their brains to devise something new for my bridal *trousseau*. You do not seem to allude to any very urgent business in your note, and, (if that will do as well,) I will call upon you with Hubert this evening. It would do your heart good to see mother bustling about, and calculating how many pounds of wedding-cake will be necessary. She is determined to make it herself, according to the good old-fashioned custom.

Send me word by the bearer whether my presence will be of any importance before evening. If it will, I must e'en leave thread, needle, and mantua-makers in the bargain, behind me, and hasten to you.

Yours, with much love, AMY.”

The answer which I sent, briefly stated that the intelligence I was forced to communicate was of considerable consequence, and that I would myself call on Amy at four o'clock that afternoon.

When four o'clock came, I kept the appointment. Amy expected me, and ran to the door herself to give me instant admission.

“Come and look at my bridal presents, they are pouring in already,” she began; leading me up stairs as she spoke. “I am so glad that you came yourself instead of waiting for me, for I have so many curiosities to show

you. Hubert has the most perfect taste in furniture, my boudoir is almost lumbered up with his gifts."

"I would rather see them at any other time, if you please, Amy."

"Certainly! but how serious you look! Has any thing unpleasant occurred at home?"

"Come into your chamber, and I will tell you."

"No, the mantaumakers are there; let us go into papa's study; he is out, and we shall not be interrupted."

We entered the study, I seated myself, and Kitty took my place by her side.

"Now tell me, it cannot be anything very terrible, although you do look a little uneasy," said Amy, smiling in my face. Her joyous heart would not even admit a painful anticipation.

"My looks belie my heart, Amy, if they are not sad. And I mourn not for myself only, but for you."

"For me, dear Miss Katherine? What affliction could menace me? Except, indeed, through those I love, and their misfortunes are truly mine."

"You have not forgotten Evelyn?"

"Evelyn! our cherished Evelyn! that I have not; I seldom cease to think of her."

"She is not dead—she is found—Ellen and I have seen her!"

Amy sprang from her seat and clasped her hands, and danced about me for very delight. I had never before beheld her so excited with joy. Her happiness had always been of a still and thoughtful nature—this ebullition of mirth seemed in her almost unnatural. Perhaps it was because it jarred upon my feelings, but I involuntarily turned away.

The instant she caught my eye, she sat down again, and her mirthfulness was suddenly checked. "Where had she been? What had happened to her? Why do you torment me, by not telling me at once, dear Miss Katherine?"

"Because, sweet Amy, I would let

'Ill tidings tell themselves
When they are felt;'

and my tidings are ill. Evelyn—she was so young—so unthinking—her principles were not fixed—nor her character formed—she has been led astray.”

“Good Heavens! speak plainly, I cannot believe that you mean she is less pure than when we last beheld her!”

“It is too true, Amy.”

“Evelyn! Unfortunate Evelyn! So innocent, and so beautiful—has she indeed fallen! That is truly terrible news! But it was only a momentary hallucination; I know her fair soul too well to think that she could ever be really depraved—and she is penitent, is she not?”

“Most penitent, and so humbled that she feels unworthiness of all kindness or pardon.”

“Where is she? Cannot you take me to her?”

I could not help exclaiming in admiration of the generosity of a truly pure mind—“Noble-hearted Amy, and you would still look upon her as your friend?”

“Surely I would, and will; she may have need of friends now! However great her fault may have been, it is not for me to condemn her.”

“This is very sorrowful intelligence, Amy, but there is some untold even more afflicting to you. Summon all your strength, try to believe that there is balm for the deepest wound—are you prepared to hear something very dreadful?”

“Quite, quite prepared—pray go on.”

“Evelyn’s seducer”——

Amy turned deadly pale, and appeared to be stifling. I could not go on. But she gasped out, “Who? who?”

“Colonel Damoreau!”

A shriek, like that which you may imagine the shipwrecked voyager gives as the waves close over him, burst from Amy’s lips. The next moment a stony calmness overspread her features. She sat rigidly still, and looking in my face as though she would say, “Strike on! You have broken my heart—you cannot do more!”

I suffered almost as much as she did, although in a different manner. Finding that she did not speak, or

alter her position, or give any other signs of life than those which that strange, despairing gaze bestowed, I gently took her hand.

She withdrew it, and murmured, "I would be alone!"

I was forced to yield to her wishes, and rising, left the room and the house.

The next day Amy came to me—the calmness of that resignation which succeeds a fierce struggle was stamped upon her features. Her demeanor was not less gentle than usual, but cold, as though her heart had been chilled. She made no allusion to her own feelings or disappointments, and the name of Colonel Damoreau never escaped her lips; but she requested me to permit her to see Evelyn.

I was not at leisure, and would gladly have postponed the visit, but all other considerations gave way at Amy's request. I accompanied her to Nancy's, and after preparing Evelyn for the interview, the friend of her childhood was once again clasped in her arms.

I left them together, but dared not remain absent long, lest Evelyn should be injured by this undue excitement. When I returned to the chamber I found that my presence was needed, for Evelyn had lost all control over herself, and was weeping upon Amy's bosom, and wildly reproaching herself for the sorrow she had brought on others.

I drew Amy away, and left Evelyn under her sister's care. Amy returned home with me. On the way, she never once mentioned herself nor her unworthy lover—her conversation turned solely upon Evelyn.

CHAPTER XIV.

“The past lives o'er again
In its effects, and to the guilty spirit
The ever-frowning present is its image.”

COLERIDGE.

From Evelyn Merritt to Katerine Bolton.

March 19th.

Dearest Miss Katerine,

Dr. Westley has permitted me to write to you. I sit propped up by pillows, scrawling with a pencil, and the book on which I write supported on my knees. Ellen looks at me and sighs; well she may—I have need of her sighs, her tears, her prayers, and yours also.

My mind is in a state of the most afflicting confusion—I cannot collect my thoughts, neither can I give them expression as I would. I turn to you, to you who have been my truest friend, for consolation. Your calming voice can breathe peace in my soul. But how shall I present to your eyes the tumultuous workings of that oppressed and troubled spirit?

Within the last few days—since I have been stretched upon this bed of pain—oh! how deeply I have thought! How torturing have been my reflections! A consciousness of the enormity of my crime weighs me down, until I seem inwardly suffocating from remorse and horror. The denouncing voice of an angry God sounds like a peal of thunder in my terrified ears. The horrors of the world after death, the world of retribution, are perpetually before my eyes. I see the husband I have deceived and dishonored, the parents to whom I have given so much sorrow—even the child I have forsaken,

rise up to accuse me, and I shrink appalled from the sentence breathed by a justly offended Creator.

I writhe in indescribable agony, yet I dare not die! Die! How shall I escape from death? All men must die, and I may perhaps be summoned away this very night. Death pursues me—stares me in the face, and stretches out its skeleton arms to grasp me!

That there is another world, a world for punishment and reward, I know—something within me tells me there is, but herè my knowledge ends. I have been taught to look upon religion as a gloomy subject, and now its boasted consolations are denied me.

I have heard persons speak of saving mercy, of a change of heart, of a purified soul, and I fervently pray that my soul may be purified, and my heart changed; tell me if I may hope that my prayers will be heard?

I pray for Heaven, too, though my sin has forfeited Heaven; tell me, is it possible that I may ever be received into its joys? Is there efficacy in the prayer of one so lost as I? Will the wrath of God be appeased by endless supplications? Oh! Miss Katerine, solve for me these horrible doubts!

You cannot come to me (so Ellen has said), for your little pupils claim your attention, but you can write, and your words are always comforting. I have need of them—write. My hand is too feeble to add more, although I have said so little. Oh! villain! villain! how could I have loved him? Yet I reproach him not—I reproach none but myself—it is this very remorse that is consuming my life. Write to me if you have still any pity for your wretched

EVELYN.

CHAPTER XV.

“Devotion’s links compose a sacred chain
 Of holy brightness and unmeasured length;
 The world, with selfish rust and reckless stain,
 May mar its beauty, but not touch its strength.”
 ELIZA COOK.

From Katerine Bolton to Evelyn Merritt.

March 19th.

I *will* write to you, my beloved and suffering Evelyn, and I trust that my words may impart that peace to your mind for which you have so vainly sought.

Endeavor with calmness to read what I shall write, or the errors which are clouding your mental vision, and disturbing your spirit, cannot be dispelled.

You speak of the “denouncing voice of an angry God;” but, Evelyn, can a Being supremely pure and perfect be moved by an evil passion? Can God, the infinite and perfect, bear anger towards the feeble, blind, and finite creatures of his hand? God views those who err with the tenderest compassion, such as is consistent with his incomprehensibly holy nature; he would win them back to himself—he would bless and comfort them, but he cannot know anger.

The literal meaning of the sacred scriptures may seem to authorize the belief that God is angry, is revengeful, is offended; but the spiritual sense, shining through the cloud of the letter, proclaims that such cannot be the case. To the eyes of sensual and unspiritualized persons, God *seems* to be angry when they have disobeyed his laws; for the punishments that they necessarily entail upon themselves appear to them as the

visitations of his wrath. But God has himself declared that he is "a God of Love." Think of him as such, and you will realize how great is his mercy.

You tell me that you pray for Heaven, and ask if it would be possible for you to be received in that home of the blessed. Heaven would not be Heaven to you, unless you were fitted to enter into its joys. It would be a place of torment, unless your life and the quality of your affections had rendered it a congenial abode. Heaven is only heaven to the pure. But if you ask *if you can fit yourself for Heaven*, I reply most truly you *can*; and you will make earth a type of Heaven by that earnest endeavour.

You bid me say whether or not "the wrath of God can be appeased by endless supplications:" and whether there is "efficacy in prayer." God needs not the adoration of such as we; it cannot increase his might, nor add to his glory. If the worship of our hearts is grateful to him, it is because by that worship we elevate our spirits into the light of Heaven, and open them to the reception of a heavenly influx—it is because we benefit ourselves. And therefore sincere prayer, the prayer of the spirit, is efficacious. Yet God cannot grant unless we are in a state to receive that for which we pray; for he cannot violate the laws of order.

God, who is Divine Love itself, and desires the happiness of all his creatures, did not create the universe for his own sake, but for the sake of those with whom he will dwell in Heaven—and that he might impart the beatitudes and felicities of Heaven to us. We were all born *for* Heaven. Many turn away from the promised land offered to all alike; but God closes not the gates of Paradise upon them; the evil cannot enter in, because Paradise is not Paradise to such as they.

You speak of a "change of heart," but I hardly think that you comprehend the nature of that change which is necessary;—the change to which Christ alludes when he says that we must be "born again." We all inherit evil propensities from our parents, some greater, some less. These evils are not appropriated to us—that is, we are not responsible for them, until we have sufficient ra-

tionality to reflect upon them, and see that they are evils. Then it is our obvious duty to struggle against and to shun them; if we fail in this, the evil propensities become our own, and we sin by indulging them. To become aware of these evils, inherent in our nature, to examine our hearts, and to combat against and overcome our inclinations to sin—this is to be renewed in spirit—to be born again. This renewal is essential to those who would obtain Heaven, for the impure cannot dwell with the pure.

There are two essential attributes given to us all. *Rationality* and *Liberty*. Without these two attributes this renewal of spirit could not be effected. It is through this principle of rationality that we are enabled to comprehend the meaning of good and evil, and to distinguish what is false from what is true. And we are *at LIBERTY* to do good or evil, and to love truth or falsehood.

We cannot be reformed when we are in a state of *rationality and liberty*. Our hearts cannot be changed by *compulsion*. For this reason we cannot be reformed while labouring under a heavy misfortune. For though we may pray to God and implore his assistance, we are under constraint, and when the memory of the affliction has passed away, we generally return into our former habits, and our lives are unchanged.

Neither can we be reformed in a disordered state of mind, because disease of the mind takes away rationality and the liberty of acting according to reason.

Nor can we be reformed in a state of bodily disease; because reason then is not in a free state, for the mind is affected by the body, and when the body is ill, the mind suffers.

If you believe my words are truth, perhaps you will grieve at this last assertion, beloved Evelyn; you will tremble lest your repentance should not be effectual. It lies with yourself to render it so; your future life, when you recover, must be the evidence that you have renounced your errors, and that you will follow the light that shines about your steps.

“But if I should die now?” I hear you exclaim. I answer, if your repentance is so genuine, that should you have lived your life would have been changed, in spite of strong temptations—then, Evelyn, even though you should die to-night, it is my firm belief that in the World of Spirits you would be permitted to fit yourself for Heaven.

But what is this Death, which appals you? This great change which appears to you so awful? Is it frightful to pass from one land to another? Death is nothing more than this transitory passage. The body, worn by disease, or age, or impaired by accident, can no longer be used as the instrument of your soul’s operations in this world. The spirit leaves it (often without a parting struggle), and the worthless shell returns to moulder in the earth. But the spirit, what becomes of it? It has a spiritual body of its own, distinct from the natural, yet of a similar human form. It possesses all the faculties, all the inclinations, all the affections, all the capacities of enjoyment with which it was endowed in the world; possesses them in an inconceivably higher degree than during its sojourn in the natural body. And it passes into the spiritual world, continuing its existence to eternity, and in progressive degrees receiving the greatest happiness which it is capable of enjoying.

If the spirit be evil, it finds no delight except in the gratification of its evil passions, and that sinful indulgence entails the most dreadful consequences.

If the spirit be good, the greater its purity, the more exquisite is its joy; and its perfection and felicity increase for ever.

And this spiritual land is the land of which Death opens the portals. Can you then regard that Death as the hideous Charon wafting us over an inky sea, and landing us upon an unknown shore replete with horrors? To me, Death appears as an angel of light, crowned with roses, stretching out its tender arms to embrace the newly imprisoned spirits, and guiding them to gardens of indescribable beauty. Is Death then so fearful? Banish impurity from your heart, and the terrors one by one

fleet away from Death's dreaded brow, and a garland of loveliness twines itself in their place.

I have written to you boldly, beloved Evelyn, on many grave subjects, but my assurance sprang from an internal conviction that I wrote nothing but truths—*demonstrable* truths. I am half inclined to reproach myself for not having spoken with more humility, and less positive confidence; but how could I write as though in humble uncertainty of those truths which were to my mind indubitable?

In glancing over my letter, I thought it almost too serious and perhaps stern for one in your state of health, my sweet Evelyn, and I was inclined to strike out or soften many portions; but I remembered that the most healthful food for your disordered spirit was simple truth, and left what I had written unaltered;—left it, in the sincere hope that you will comprehend my meaning and receive comfort from my reasonings.

I must entreat you, dear Evelyn, to give way to no violent burst of feeling; excitement will retard your recovery, and you will thus render more distant an hour of great happiness to those who love you as tenderly as

Your true and devoted friend,

KATERINE.

CHAPTER XVI.

“’Tis fabled there are fruits with tempting rinds
That are all dust and rottenness within;
Wouldst thou I should strip such?”

COLERIDGE.

From Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

March 25th.

AH! Fred, the deuce take the sex! They are doomed to be my eternal curse. “My bane and antidote,” as Plato has it. Except that just at this present, confoundedly unpleasant moment, they are all bane; and a less hopeful disposition than my own would see no prospect of the antidote.

For the last two months I have been Fate’s foot-ball, and it is to be hoped that the fickle jade will soon be tired of buffeting me about the ears of Disappointment.

What think you? Amy, the mild, the gentle, the yielding, devoted, loving Amy—Amy who in one short fortnight was to pronounce the happy “yes,” which made her agreeable possessions, and her by no means disagreeable self, *mine*—Amy has—in one execrable word, the little witch has jilted me!

Impossible, you think—what woman would have the courage to jilt the irresistible Colonel Damoreau? So thought I, but this little feminine icicle has actually had the necessary audacity; although, may I be hanged to a bean-post, for an infernal fool, if she holds to her determination. She shall be my wife yet, or she will be the first woman who could withstand my persuasions. But then the others have always been wooed to commit some little imprudence; and such is the perverseness of

these *feminae*, that I may find it more difficult to induce one woman to do that for which she has no reason to blush, than to cause fifty to compromise themselves irretrievably.

I learnt my fate from Amy's own pale lips a very few days ago. I had called on her in the evening, as usual, with the bouquet which I never fail to present her in my hand. When I entered the parlor, she was alone. The smile of welcome, the bounding step, and the "meek embrace" with which, Genevieve-like, she generally salutes me—to my astonishment, none of these now greeted my entrance.

She was sitting upon an ottoman at the further end of the room—she did not rise, she did not move a limb when she saw me. As I drew near her, the light-colored silk dress she wore, her remarkably fair hair, and her perfectly hueless face, made her look like some beautiful statue. For a second I was awe-struck, yet you are pretty well aware, Fred, that I am not the man to lose my self-possession at trifles.

I addressed her tenderly, and stooped to salute her colorless cheek. She stretched out her hand to repulse me, and fixed her usually mild eyes upon my face. I cannot say what was their expression—whether full of scorn, or pity, or sorrow, or despair—it might have been a mingling of all—but I would not have dared to touch her at that moment—I confess it—no, not if my salvation depended upon an embrace. But, by Jove, she had never looked so charming before—I was excited, interested; I grew enamoured while I stood almost trembling before her.

She motioned me to take a seat, and I did so. I made an attempt to say something—I forget what, but she silenced me with a look. Then she spoke herself—what a voice! Never before did the tone of woman make me shudder. What she said I can no more tell you, though I heard every word, than I can repeat the books of Moses. The sum total was this: Evelyn has come to light; some little unfortunate passages in my life in connection with the lovely runaway have been made known

to Amy. My puritanical *affiance* chose to take my conduct in high dudgeon; she made her own saintly animadversions, interspersed with a few moral reflections, upon my acts, and finally declined the honor of becoming my wife. Was ever poor fellow maddened by a more unlucky accident than this?

But, by Heavens, I like her better than ever, and I will not be cheated out of my rightful expectations in this manner. She loves me — she dotes on me as only these feminine creations know how to dote. I will win her yet, or she is no daughter of Eve. Nothing pleases these demi-saints so well as the idea that they have reclaimed a rake; and she shall reform me to her heart's content. Then for fear that I should fall into the evil way again, she must take me under her own protection.

That evening was not the time to make much progress; I could say little — almost nothing; for without giving me time to exculpate myself, she rose and glided like a shadow out of the room. But I have since despatched her the most repentant letters, and every evening my accustomed bouquet is left *anonymously* at the door. The letters she returned in a blank envelope, but the bouquets she could not in the same manner refuse. If she did, I might choose to understand that she *sent* me a bouquet instead of returning my own, for from whence they came she cannot prove.

I will see her soon, and trust me for the rest. Her heart is irrevocably mine, and women are not such fools as to die of longing when the fruit which they desire hangs ready to drop into their mouths.

But I am rattling on, Fred, without acquainting you with the principal object of my letter. I am in such confoundedly low water, that I have commenced disposing of all my dispensable valuables to raise the wind. Lend us a hand in this dilemma, my fine fellow, and you will not be the worse off for your good nature. Amy will most undoubtedly be mine, and as soon as the priest closes his prayer-book, you shall be repaid with interest.

Six or seven hundred, or a thousand dollars, would just at this moment prove a very acceptable loan. In

short, I do not see how I can do without it—so let me hear from you by return of post.

Amy had not the complaisance to inform me where I should find her rival; and to ask the whereabouts of the syren Evelyn would have been to make a rather hazardous inquiry. Where she has hidden herself, Heaven only knows; but it is very evident that she has purposely kept this rod in pickle for me.

Then, there is Claudine, another of my tormentors—a few days before the *denouement* which I have mentioned, I had the felicity of meeting the little she d—l again. It chanced, too, that I was walking with Amy. Claudine looked wildly and menacingly at us both, and I fancied that she and Amy exchanged glances, but this of course was only a conceit of my own. Claudine's wrath is not to be feared; the serpent has certainly lost its fang, or its venom would have been darted out before now.

Farewell, my most estimable and excellent friend. Be thou a friend in need. I await your answer, which you must despatch without delay. You will do me a great service and relieve me from actual difficulties, by obliging me with the loan. Enough said between friends.

Yours, very truly,

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

N.B. I have this instant received a curious note, which for its very address, I shall copy verbatim for your benefit. Thus it runs:

“If Colonel Damoreau desires again to behold Evelyn Merritt, he will call this afternoon at No. —, Grand street, and inquire for the person who occupies the back chamber on the first floor.”

The question is, “Shall I go?” I have no very high opinion of these anonymous communications, yet the temptation of beholding Evelyn is not so easily withstood. If I was sure of keeping myself out of harm's way, I should accept the invitation—especially as it is written in a delicate female hand. There is now too

much hazarded by every step that I take, for me to decide hastily. After duly weighing the pro and con, I may go, and I may not.

H. D.

CHAPTER XVII.

“Love on, love on—ay, even though the heart
 We fondly build on proveth like the sand;
 Though one by one Faith’s corner stones depart,
 And even Hope’s last pillar fails to stand;
 Though we may dread the lips we once believed,
 And know their falsehood shadows all our days,
 Who would not rather trust and be deceived,
 Than own the mean, cold spirit that betrays?”

ELIZA COOK.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

March 25th.

ON returning from a visit to Evelyn yesterday morning, almost the first persons whom I met were Colonel Damoreau and Mr. Elton, walking arm and arm! I had forgotten that they were acquainted.

It would be difficult to decide the sight of which of these two unfortunate men pained me most deeply. How an accidental meeting, a casual glance, will revive scenes and thoughts which we have perhaps spent an existence in trying to forget! The seal upon our Book of Life melts at a look, and long-closed pages of that mystic volume are spread before us, to pain or to rejoice. But heart-stricken, wounded, and betrayed, we must still live on—dream on—and it may be, love on!

When I reached home, little Netta opened the door for me with a very portentous face.

“What is the matter now?” I enquired.

"Oh! Miss Katerine, I have had such trouble with Blanche;" answered the child, who seemed to feel the full dignity and importance attached to the double offices of jailor and spy.

"What has happened?" I asked, and not without some evil forebodings.

"Nothing much; only she acts so queer; and she got out of the house *unbeknownt* to me. But she wasn't gone long before I missed her; and I went right after her, just as you told me. I saw her three or four blocks ahead, for I knew her by her shawl, and ran after her as hard as I could tear. But I couldn't get up to her until she'd been into the apothecary's right by the Park. She pushed against me when she came out, and made for home. I was alongside of her in a jiffy, and then I saw that she was hiding something under her shawl; but I couldn't get her to tell me what it was. I tried hard though, for I was sure you'd want to know. When we came home I watched her, but I couldn't make out that she had anything at all along with her, and I thought perhaps that I might be mistaken."

"Where is she now?"

"Up stairs, settling the rooms."

Confused visions of arsenic, and Prussic acid, and laudanum, flitted through my head as I sought Blanche; but when I found her my alarm was soon dispelled. She was arranging Mrs. Willard's bed, and singing a lively French air as she beat up the bolsters. There was no trepidation in her look and manner, and she appeared calmer and more collected than usual.

"You have been out, Blanche," said I; "where did you go?"

"To buy some Cologne," she replied, holding up a small bottle which she had laid upon the table. Her unembarrassed tone quieted my fears. But as I walked away I accidentally caught sight of her face reflected in the glass; it was lighted by a strange exulting smile. I turned towards her again, but her countenance was perfectly calm, and she continued her employment com-

posedly shaking the mattress, and smoothing the pillows.

To satisfy myself further, I went to her room and searched amongst her clothes; but nothing of a suspicious nature was discoverable.

My school has so rapidly increased within the last few weeks, that I now number fifteen pupils who regularly attend. Since Evelyn's illness, Ellen's desk has remained vacant; but though the duties thrown solely upon me are many and arduous, they are not greater than I can faithfully discharge. I never depart from one established system, and strict method renders labor light.

I have not, as you may suppose, had much leisure to devote to Evelyn, but she hardly needs my presence, for Amy and Ellen are constantly by her side. Though still feeble, she is convalescent, and her recovery appears to be certain. Her mental sufferings have been great, but they are now considerably ameliorated.

Of Amy I hardly know what to write. Her self-control strikes me almost with awe. She moves about with a placid brow, performing a thousand kind offices for her unfortunate friend, and hourly devising some mode of rendering Evelyn's remorse less poignant; but of herself she never appears to think.

Except that her cheek is deadly pale, and her voice is often tremulous, I can detect little change from what she was before her betrothal to Colonel Damoreau. Is this insensibility, or the very acme of womanly self-control?

Mrs. Willard evidently suspects that Ellen's continued attendance upon the invalid at Nancy's has some connection with my conversation the other evening. It is this suspicion which has of late rendered her manner more *brusque* than ever, her tone more querulous, and her whole demeanor harsher. And Evelyn—how can the earnest desire of her penitent spirit ever be gratified? She has no mother now! This afternoon, when I see her, perhaps—

March 26th.

I broke off hastily yesterday morning, for it was time for the school-bell to sound—well for me was it that I knew not what yesterday afternoon would bring forth!

After dinner I paid my wonted visit to Evelyn. She was sitting up in the veteran arm-chair which had been given to Nancy for the use of the old grandmother. Amy and Ellen were near her, both busied with their needles.

Before I proceed, let me mention that Amy's bounty has diffused an air of comfort about Evelyn's little chamber which entirely destroys its resemblance to the wretched abode in which Ellen and I at first discovered the unhappy fugitive. The rickety cot has been supplanted by a small but comfortable French bed; the floor is covered with a neat carpet; a pretty chintz curtain hangs before the only window; there are several commodious chairs, a little table, a *veillense*, and a diminutive air-tight stove which stands upon the hearth.

Evelyn made serious objections to these alterations in her chamber, for they only seemed to render her more sensible of her unworthiness—more strongly contrasting her own fallen state with Amy's angel-like purity and goodness. But her remonstrances sounded like ingratitude, and, as she submitted, she felt that kindness was indeed "coals of fire heaped upon her head."

When I entered the room, Amy was conversing in a subdued tone with her friend, but she ceased on beholding me. Laying aside my hat as I greeted them, I seated myself beside Evelyn. In her loose white wrapper she looked thinner than ever. I was marking the ravages which disease and sorrow had made in her wasted form, and wondering whether it was the elevated expression of her faded features which rendered them still so lovely, when she started at some sound which her ear had caught without its reaching mine.

Her sudden movement aroused our attention. Nancy's voice, raised in angry remonstrance, was distinctly audible. Her words, and those of the person to whom she spoke, were soon drowned by the terrified cries of

little Johnny. In another moment the altercation ceased. It was succeeded by a heavy but hasty step traversing the outer apartment. Ellen rose instinctively to fasten the chamber door; but it flew open before she could touch the key!

A mournful cry burst from Evelyn's lips—Richard, with a livid countenance, stood before her!

“Evy! Oh, Evy! Evy!” His gaunt frame shook as he spoke, and his blood-shot eyes closed and re-opened spasmodically, as though the tears with which they were filled caused acute pain.

“Evy!” he exclaimed again, but even more hoarsely: and rather as if soliloquizing than addressing his sister. “No—tain't Evy! I wouldn't believe it—tain't Evy sitting before me in that chair! Its her ghost may be—tain't Evy!”

The first thoughts were engrossed by her altered appearance; for he beheld, indeed, the mere shadow of what Evelyn was. But when with her head drooping upon her bosom, she stretched out her thin hand, and falteringly murmured “Brother!” he recoiled—his features were convulsed—their expression rapidly changed!

Looking almost fiercely at the trembling invalid, he shook his clenched fist, and shouted, “No! No brother of yours! Never call me *brother*, 'till I know it's all an inf—l lie! But it ain't—it couldn't be anything else. Evy! tell me yourself, and I'll hunt the rascal that invented it round the globe! You didn't, you wouldn't, you couldn't—Oh! Evy, you loved *me*, you loved us all too well to disgrace us!”

“Spare me! Spare me, Richard!” pleaded Evelyn, as she shrank back, yet stretched her arms imploringly towards him.

“It's true then! No it ain't—it shan't be! Blisters on the foul tongue that said it was true; it's a lie—Evelyn Merritt, tell me quickly, say that it's a lie, before I go stark, raving mad! Speak! speak, and say you are my sister yet!”

He approached her menacingly, as he uttered these furious words. Evelyn shook her averted head, and hid her face upon Amy's shoulder.

Richard's emotion was so violent, that he could hardly gasp forth, "I won't believe it! Evy! Evy! I'm a fool! I'll tar and feather the first fellow I meet! I'll make mince-meat of that scoundrel, the Colonel! I'll *lynch* him and all his relations! I'll exterminate the vermin! But it ain't true—though I've got it all here"—he drew a letter out of his pocket—"where Evy lived—where she'd been—*what* she'd been! "Thunder and lightning! if I could catch the rascal that wrote this I'd powder his bones without a mortar!" He crushed and crumpled the letter in his hands, while he was speaking; then abstractedly smoothed it again—opened it—read a few lines, and suddenly darting towards Evelyn seized her rudely by the shoulder.

"Will you tell me the truth, girl! Are you a shame to your sex, and a blot on our name, and no sister of mine? Say—are you Colonel Damoreau's *mistress*? A street-walker! A low—lost—depraved—polluted—cast-off—dreg and remnant"—

Evelyn's agonizing shame and horror, seemed to threaten instant dissolution; the heart-rending groan that escaped her lips, recalled my wandering senses. With a violent effort I rose from the chair, to which I seemed to have been chained. Richard could not finish his dreadful sentence, for I thrust him aside, exclaiming, "You will kill her! For the love of Heaven, have some pity! Be a man!"

He stopped, and drew back; while I, filling a tumbler with water, held it to Evelyn's lips. She could not drink—her head sank upon the cushion of the chair—her eyes closed.

Richard stood watching his sister, while Amy bathed her temples, and then burst forth in a voice broken by stifled sobs, "How I loved you, Evy! Such pride—I took such pride in you! And now—now they can fling it in my teeth—any raggamuffin can make light of you! The street-sweeps may throw their mud at me—I haven't anything to care for now! New York must get along without me! I shan't think too much of hiding"—

"Mr. Willard," interposed I, "your sister is very ill;

I must insist upon your leaving her for the present." I accompanied my words with a tolerably forcible attempt to lead him from the room.

He broke loose, and this time shaking his fist at me, as though he was glad of some new object upon which to vent his wrath and grief, exclaimed "Miss Katy—Miss Katy—you're—you're an *old woman!* You are!

For a second, I felt the truth of Byron's lines :

" Yet in extremest grief
There is a *mirth*"—

I could have laughed, laughed though my feelings had seldom been so harrowed.

I was about to reply by beseeching Richard to withdraw, when a step behind me—an ejaculation from Ellen and Amy, and a piercing shriek from Evelyn, made me quiver in every limb.

I looked back, and beheld Colonel Damoreau retreating towards the open door!

I could not have believed that his manly features could express such mingled horror and cowardice. In extreme terror I turned to Evelyn again. She was standing—upright—unsupported—with her glazing eyes riveted upon his; her lips apart, and pale as her hueless cheeks. Her limbs, one moment rigid, slowly relaxed; her head fell, and she sank lifeless into Ellen's arms!

With an impulse, such as I am sure has seldom moved him, Colonel Damoreau sprang forward, and threw himself upon his knees beside Evelyn: for she lay partly extended upon the floor, and partly supported upon her kneeling sister's bosom.

He seized his victim's icy hand, but Richard, darting upon him with tiger-like fury grasped his arm, and dragged him away, shouting: "Don't do that—don't dare to touch her—if she *is* dead, I'd see all the worms in Christendom crawling over her rather than let you lay a finger on her!"

Colonel Damoreau had risen to his feet, and though he strove to confront Richard, he had lost all control over his convulsed muscles.

“Now, Sir,” said Richard, again laying hold of his arm, “I’ve caught you, and you’re accountable to me—to *me*, Sir! Do you know who I am? To *me*—to that lady’s brother—for she *was* my sister before you made her a disgrace to any man who claimed kin with her. Oh! you d—n—ble, double-faced scoundrel!” And he seized the Colonel by the throat with such a powerful grasp that it was only by a violent effort that his adversary could extricate himself.

Colonel Damoreau was taken at the greatest disadvantage; he was perfectly unmanned—unnerved;—he tried to throw an expression of contempt into his countenance as he regarded Richard, but the look was not unmingled with one of bewildered terror.

“Sir!” he began, but his eyes wandered back to the inanimate Evelyn, and then rested despairingly upon Amy.

With a sudden movement he shook off Richard, and rushed towards the bed upon which Evelyn had been laid.

“Amy—hear me, Amy,” said he, in that rich thrilling tone which had so often charmed our ears.

Amy rose from the half-recumbent position in which she was ministering to Evelyn—rose with what majestic, awe-inspiring dignity! And as she turned her pale face towards him, its expression would have been stern but for the pitying sweetness which mingled with its severity. Her eyes were not cast down before his pleading glance; and she said in a tone and with an action, which made me think of some rebuking angel: “May the misery which you have brought on others never be visited upon yourself! Begone!”

He attempted to speak, but she repeated commandingly, “Begone!” And the reckless man of the world shrank before this meek and simple-hearted girl—abashed at her look, and involuntarily obeying her bidding. It was the momentary triumph of purity over insolent vice.

Amy was again bending over Evelyn, and Colonel Damoreau stood at the open door, uncertain whether to advance or retreat. Richard, who had motionlessly

watched Ellen, while with tremulous hands she essayed to revive her sister, now strided towards the Colonel, as though fearful that he would escape.

“Not so fast, Sir; not so fast. You are answerable to *me*—remember that! If I don’t get a gentleman’s satisfaction out of you, then my name’s not Dick, nor never was! Oh! d—n you, d—n you! for the greatest scoundrel that wears a head! But I’ll teach you whose folks you’ve got to deal with now, I will!”

Amy, who also heard these words, again left Evelyn’s side, and laying her hand beseechingly on Richard’s arm, said: “Mr. Willard, I beg that you will allow us to be alone; your sister—” her voice was choked by emotion, and she could not finish her sentence.

“Poor Evy! poor Evy!” muttered Richard. “The jig’s up with her: better so—better so!” Then turning to the Colonel, he roared out: “Come along, Sir! come along!” and forced him out of the room.

Amy closed the door, and turned the key. We gathered about Evelyn. No breath came to her lips, no warmth to her clammy hands, which Ellen was chafing; no hue to the ghastly countenance, fixed in statue-like repose. We none spoke, none wept, but with an awe-inspired quietude earnestly continued our efforts to restore the suspended animation. Minutes seemed like hours to us, for our task was vain!

Amy clasped her hands in mute despair, and stood inactive by the bedside. Ellen threw herself moaning and weeping upon the cold form of her sister, as though her warm tears and passionate kisses could restore it to life. And I—what could I do, but mourn in silence?

How long we remained thus, I cannot say: a wild but joyful exclamation from Ellen aroused us “Great God! she moved—she revives!”

A faint hue was indeed tinging Evelyn’s marble cheek, and the lids of her half-closed eyes slightly quivered. Picture to yourself our heartfelt, grateful joy, when in a few moments more intelligence beamed in those before glazing eyes, and recognition was followed by a languid smile.

That smile quickly vanished when recollection returned; but Evelyn was restored to us, and we were too thankful to think of sorrow.

No allusion to Richard or Colonel Damoreau was made, but Evelyn's countenance plainly told that her memory was not impaired.

Amy possesses even a greater influence over her friend than either Ellen or I, and Evelyn was momentarily becoming more agitated. Seating herself upon the bed beside her, Amy motioned us to withdraw.

We left the room, and entered Nancy's shop. Neither Colonel Damoreau nor Richard was visible. Nancy informed us that the first gentleman had forced his way in, that she was not in the shop when the second came, and that both had left the house together.

"How could they possibly have discovered Evelyn's retreat?" asked Ellen, as though she would willingly persuade herself that I possessed the art of divination, and could answer her question.

"I cannot imagine," replied I; "Richard, it appears, received a letter—perhaps it was an anonymous one."

"It was very strange that they should both come at the same hour! Do you know that while they were here, I thought that some wicked person had planned the meeting, and I dreaded every moment to see Walter enter."

"But who could have planned it? Who knows of Evelyn's existence even?"

"Is not Laura Hilson acquainted with Dr. Westley?" inquired Ellen, thoughtfully.

"No—yes, I believe she is. He often called upon me while I was at Fleecer's, and the Hilsons made his acquaintance. But Dr. Westley does not himself know that his patient is Evelyn."

"Perhaps not, but—"

Amy opened the door, and we hastened to Evelyn's bedside. She was perfectly calm, though a tear glistened on her cheek. It had now grown quite dark, and after bribing Billy to escort me to an omnibus, I prepared to return home.

The tea-table was spread, and Mrs. Willard impatiently awaited me. Mr. Willard was casting up accounts at a small side-table in the corner.

His wife took no apparent notice of my unusual trepidation of manner, and she has ceased to ask questions or make remarks concerning the invalid who engrosses so much of our time. I more than suspect that she has divined the truth.

Our report was not a very cheerful one, for I found it difficult to regain my composure. Just as we were rising from the table, Netta was summoned by a loud ring to the street door, and a moment afterwards we were joined by—Mr. Merritt.

I at first thought that it was my own conscious fancy which gave him such a wild and haggard look when he entered. His hair hung in dishevelled masses about his thin face, and his dress was strangely disordered. His manner, too, on greeting us, was abrupt and nervous, and he cast many uneasy glances about the room: once only were his wandering eyes fixed, and then they looked steadily in my face. I could not help shrinking before his searching gaze; it seemed to me as though he had the power to read every secret within my soul.

While Netta was clearing the table, the conversation was wholly sustained by Mrs. Willard; her son-in-law was too absent even to reply to her numerous queries.

All at once he turned to me and said: "Miss Bolton, can I speak a few words to you alone? I have something of importance to say; let it be as soon as possible."

I was beginning to grow nervous, but replied, "Certainly, Mr. Merritt, Mrs. Willard will excuse us:" and lighting a candle led the way to the school-room.

Mr. Merritt followed me: the door was closed: we were alone together.

I handed him a chair—he took it—and we both sat down, but neither spoke.

After one of those awful pauses, in which anticipation conjures up everything that is disagreeable, Mr. Merritt broke the silence by exclaiming, "Miss Bolton!—You

—you will think me a fool to be played upon in this manner, but I do believe that I am half mad.”

“Pray explain yourself, Mr. Merritt;” I answered. “If I can be of any service, you can command me.”

He still hesitated—but after another shorter interval thrust his hand into his pocket, and drawing forth a letter, forced it into my hand, and said, hurriedly, “What do you think of that? Read! Read!”

I mechanically unfolded the letter—the hand-writing was evidently disguised—it was anonymous. A mist floated before my eyes, and it was some time before I could decipher the words. I perused them at last: as nearly as I can remember, they were as follows.

March 25th.

“If Mr. Merritt desires again to behold his wife, he will find her this afternoon at No. —, Grand street.

“Since husbands are the last to become thoroughly aware of their own domestic calamities, it may be well to remark that Mrs. Merritt has for some months past been under the protection of Colonel Damoreau, by whom she was finally forsaken.

“Amongst the persons aware of Mrs. Merritt’s disgrace, and most prominent in encouraging and upholding her now that she is destitute, we may mention Miss Bolton.

“The misguided Evelyn is indebted to this officious lady’s influence for many of her misfortunes; but upon that subject it is useless to enlarge. Miss Bolton is thoroughly acquainted with Mrs. Merritt’s private history. If Mr. Merritt has any curiosity to ascertain the truth of these assertions, he will call this afternoon, 5 o’clock, at No. —, Grand street.”

I finished the letter with feelings of disgust and a sickening sense of terror perfectly indescribable.

Mr. Merritt was watching me; as my eyes encountered his, he groaned out, “I did not believe it! A hoax! A hoax! I knew that it was a cruel hoax! I would not be made a fool of—I did not go there. But I was so

oppressed with dread—so maddened with fear, that I came to you—you are kind—you will not ridicule my credulity—you will tell me the truth—but I know it already—it was all a hoax! People should learn to take such things coolly—to despise them—but I hate jests—you know that I always hated them.”

What could I say? How could I extinguish the last flickering hope which was the sole light of this miserable man’s existence? I could not reply to him, but turned my eyes again upon the letter.

He saw my indecision—and said, in a tone of alarm, “You do not speak! You look pale! Why do you not relieve me from this terrible suspicion?” And then added, drawing nearer to me, and with increasing agitation, “Do you know anything of Evelyn? For Heaven’s sake, do not keep me in this state of suspense and torture! Is she alive?”

“Yes, she lives.”

Joy mastered every other feeling—banished every doubt, cast out every dread—for a moment Mr. Merritt’s face was irradiated by hope: “Oh, God!” he murmured, “this is too much happiness!”

He turned from me, but it was to hide the tears that flowed down his cheeks.

I could not endure to see him cherishing a false hope; “Mr. Merritt——” I began; but he interrupted me.

“She is alive! You said she lived? Pardon me for being so overcome—I never thought——” he stopped, the pitying expression of my countenance startled him. “Where is she?” he questioned hurriedly. “How came you to discover her? Where has she been?”

Before I had made up my mind what to reply, he asked impatiently, “Did any accident befall her?”

“No.”

That simple word struck a cold chill to his heart—the truth burst upon him like a flash of lightning—and like the lightning it blasted and withered.

The convulsive workings of his features were positively fearful: I was forced to avert my eyes as I said, “Evelyn was very young—she was deluded—she has

been very unfortunate. She has suffered——” I could say no more. How could I plead for the guilty wife to her injured husband?

Mr. Merritt made no reply. He rose—his face was almost fierce in its sternness, and yet he was calm. He bowed to me, and I extended my hand. Hesitatingly he took it and said, “I cannot think ill of you!” He tried to command his voice, but its tone was husky and feeble.

I was provoked with myself that I could say no more, that I could not speak one expiatory word for Evelyn; but my parched lips seemed glued to each other, and my tongue refused its office.

Mr. Merritt had approached the door—as he opened it we heard the sound of hastily retreating steps, and I knew that our conversation had not passed unheard. Mr. Merritt re-entered the parlor to bid Mr. and Mrs. Willard good evening. The former was still engaged with his account-books, and Mrs. Willard was sitting upon the sofa, apparently knitting. But I remarked that her spool of cotton had rolled away, and that her needles were entangled, as though she had thrown them down carelessly, and taken them up in haste.

Mr. Merritt bade us a ceremonious “Good night,” and, almost before it was returned, withdrew.

I expected to be questioned by Mrs. Willard, but she continued busily occupied in extricating her needles, and never alluded to her son-in-law’s visit.

I retired early to bed, and confused images of Mr. Merritt, Colonel Damoreau, Richard, and Evelyn haunted my dreams.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“Or one or both must fall—if one, ’t is well,
If both, ’t were better——”

The Duellist.

From the Same to the Same.

March 27th

I HAD scarcely folded and commenced sealing my letter yesterday, when a scream from Netta, echoed by Blanche, made me drop the burning wax and hasten down stairs. The street-door was open: a carriage stood in front of the house: Netta was running towards the coach, from which Mr. Elton and the driver were lifting Richard Willard.

They bore him into the house. And I, without enquiring what had befallen him, for I now saw that it was some serious accident, led the way to my own chamber.

As they laid Richard upon Ellen’s bed, that thoughtful little creature, Netta, caught hold of my dress and enquired, “Shall I run for the doctor? Shall I run quickly for the doctor?”

I answered in the affirmative, and she darted away.

Richard groaned as they laid him down; but a moment after, in spite of his suffering, he cried out in a gruff tone: “I’m done for—but there’s no use of crying over spilt milk—I only wish it had been through my head! I wouldn’t give a fig to live an hour longer. The d——l take the scoundrel! Why couldn’t he do the thing genteely while he was about it! He might as well have made a clean job of it at once! I shouldn’t have

minded if I had only peppered him finely—the scoundrel! the sheep-faced ruffian!”

I now gained courage to enquire of Mr. Elton “what had happened?”

Before my question could be answered, it was repeated by Mrs. Willard, who at that moment entered the room.

“Don’t make a fuss, mother,” replied Richard, raising himself upon his elbow; “there’s something of me left yet, though it isn’t much!” and he sank feebly back upon the pillow.

“I suppose we had not trouble enough without your getting into a scrape,” remarked Mrs. Willard in no very consolatory voice.

“Pray tell me what has happened?” I once more enquired of Mr. Elton. “How has Mr. Willard been hurt?”

“I am very sorry to reply, in a duel; I hope that the injury he has sustained is not serious. Had you not better send for medical aid?”

“I have already done so. And you——”

“He was my second to be sure! And a braver isn’t to be found in these United States! He’s no more afraid of bullets and gunpowder than if they were so much salt and green peas.

“I met him in the street, and told him what I was going to do; and when he found trying to persuade me out of it was no go, he said he’d stand by me and see fair play. And he did it! I shouldn’t want a braver second, nor a more independent fellow, if I was fighting again to-morrow.”

“And what possessed you to fight at all?” asked Mrs. Willard sharply.

“To vindicate the honor of my family to be sure! and to punish the d——ndest scoundrel that walks the earth! We fought at Hoboken—he shot me down at the first fire; I shouldn’t have cared a snap for that, but he got off scot-free himself—that’s more than I bargained for. If I were only on my legs again, I’d riddle

him—I would—until there wasn't a sound place in his body!"

Again I turned to Mr. Elton, and falteringly enquired: "With whom did he fight?" I hardly know why I asked the question, for surely I could have answered it myself.

"With Colonel Damoreau," replied he.

At this moment the quick, laboring breath of somebody behind me attracted my attention. I turned round and beheld Blanche. She had stolen into the room, and was standing at the foot of the bed, grasping the post to support herself. Her large eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and her white and terrified face was turned towards Mr. Elton.

His perfect command over every feature was truly astonishing. He neither seemed to recognize, nor even to notice her. But when with a penetrating glance I looked at him again, he quietly added: "The Colonel escaped unhurt. Mr. Willard desired to fire a second time, but found himself unable to stand. The whole affair took place so hurriedly, that I think it probable we shall escape the investigation of the authorities. The penalty of duelling is exceedingly heavy in this state. I assure you that I used my utmost endeavours to prevent the meeting; and even when the parties were on the ground attempted to effect a reconciliation—but my efforts were thrown away."

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He endeavoured to turn upon his side, but failed; and

for some minutes lay groaning, as though in great agony.

When he again spoke, it was to me, and in a much feebler tone. "I shan't stand it long, Miss Kitty—I shall kick the bucket soon! But it's no matter—I wouldn't give a rush to live now. Miss Kitty, come closer—I didn't mean to call you an *old woman*, Miss Kitty—don't remember it, and don't bear me any spite. But come nearer—nearer——"

I bent over him, and then he whispered, "Is she dead? Poor Evy! Poor Evy! Is it all over with her?"

"No, she only fainted."

For an instant his countenance kindled, but it quickly grew gloomy again—and he muttered, "I'm sorry for it—sorry for it—she couldn't do better than die. The world's not worth living in now—I wouldn't take a lease of the whole globe for a gift."

Netta's return with Dr. R——, who fortunately resides in our neighbourhood, precluded all further conversation.

Dr. R. pronounced that the ball had lodged just beneath the knee-pan, and it was necessary that the bullet should be extracted.

As my services were not required, I left the room before the operation commenced, leading Blanche. Mrs. Willard followed us; the feelings of maternity were not sufficiently strong to attach her to the side of her son in his hour of suffering.

We were joined by Mr. Elton as soon as the operation was at an end. It had been a very painful one, and Richard had fainted twice from exhaustion.

"You will permit me to share your labors in attending upon your son?" said he to Mrs. Willard.

"We are very much obliged to you," she replied courteously.

Mr. Elton glanced at me as though to ask, "Will you also make me welcome?"

I replied to his look by a distant bow, and left the room.

Last evening Ellen did not return home! Richard

occupied her bed, and Mr. Elton also was our guest. I dreamed through the night, extended upon the home-made sofa, which Richard had once pronounced "harder than the soft side of a plank;" and my stiffened limbs in the morning testified to the truth of his remark.

I have not seen the sisters since day before yesterday. I thought it best not to apprize Ellen, for the present, of her brother's unfortunate adventure.

The intelligence would only weigh upon her spirits, and should it accidentally be discovered by Evelyn, we might look forward to the most serious results.

Richard is feverish this morning, and though his life is not at present in danger, he has forever lost the use of his limb. Such is Dr. R.'s opinion.

I have watched Blanche very closely. She has several times encountered Mr. Elton, but he treats her as a stranger. She is in a continual state of agitation, which prevents her assuming her usual occupation. Her countenance wears the same disturbed look which formerly alarmed me. She does not answer when addressed, and does not seem to notice or comprehend what is said. Her mind wanders again. Ah! sweet Blanche, it was a cold heart indeed that could do thee wrong!

* * * * *

Night.

They are all once more at rest—but my sofa-couch is too uninviting to promise repose to my wearied limbs. And the day has been too replete with incidents for the night to bring sleep.

This was Saturday, and I spent part of the morning in writing to you. At noon Mr. Elton left Richard, and as his mother spares not her reproaches when alone with him, I carried my work into his room. In a very few minutes Mrs. Willard made an excuse, and disappeared. Soon after I thought, that a carriage stopped at our door, but presumed I must be mistaken, and that I had only heard the Doctor's gig.

Some words which did not reach my ear, were exchanged with Netta in the entry, and slow steps mounted the stairs, and stopped at Richard's apartment.

I rose and opened the door—there stood Ellen supporting what might have been deemed the ghost of her sister!

“I could not prevent her—she would come; but Richard! Richard!” said Ellen anxiously.

“Richard!” faintly exclaimed her sister.

Richard had been roused by the voices, and tried to raise himself in bed.

“Evy! no tain’t—yes, ’tis—Evy! Evy!” He uttered these words in a smothered voice, but Evelyn heard them.

She was almost too feeble to walk, but tried to approach him, and sustained by Ellen and myself, was led to the bedside. She would have sunk upon her knees, but this I prevented, and placed her in a chair.

Ah! what a piteous glance was that which she cast upon her brother! And then she said in a tone full of inexpressible anguish: “I have done this! I have brought all this sorrow upon you!”

“No, you haven’t neither!” answered Richard stoutly, although at the moment, he was moved almost to tears. “I say, it wasn’t you! I’d like to hear anybody say it was a sister of mine did it! It was that d——d scoundrel, the Colonel! The smooth-tongued, oily-faced villain! I suspected him from the first—I did! My poor Evy! Don’t now—don’t look as though you were going to be hung! They don’t hang women for such things—though, the deuce take them! they ought to!”

“You cannot know how wretched I am!” murmured Evelyn.

“Don’t tell me—I can though! I never saw a living thing look so down in the mouth, and I’m as badly off myself. Poor Evy! Poor Evy! You deserve it though—so do I for introducing that scoundrel to you! There’s a pair of us! Now, now, keep a brave upper lip—don’t say any more about it—I’ll pepper him yet!”

“Oh! Richard!” faltered Evelyn.

“I will! if ever I stand on my legs again!”

“Speak kindly to Evelyn,” whispered Ellen, “she *would* come to see you.”

“You’re a good girl, Nelly;” replied Richard; “not many like you—you’re the girl for my money after all’s said and done.”

“Mother—pray let me see mother?” asked Evelyn, beseechingly.

Ellen was on the point of seeking Mrs. Willard, when she entered the room. I was standing in such a position that Evelyn was accidentally concealed. Mrs. Willard only saw Ellen, and accosted her with “So you have deigned to come home at last! You led us to suppose that there was more than one runaway in the family!”

Evelyn rose up, and threw herself at her mother’s feet!

Mrs. Willard screamed in actual terror; for a moment she contemplated her child with a countenance full of grief and pity.

“Mother! Pardon, pardon me!”

In an instant Mrs. Willard regained her usual uncompromising sternness. “Never!” she exclaimed bitterly; “You have brought poverty, and misery and disgrace upon us all! You are no child of mine!”

She turned away—but Evelyn imploringly clung to her dress.

“Mother—one word—one word! Mother”——

Mrs. Willard rudely shook her off. “Go! take your shame somewhere else! This is no asylum for depraved women. You are nothing to me. If I had seen you in your coffin, I might have grieved over you!”

“I shall be there soon, mother!”

“Let go of my dress, will you?” almost screamed Mrs. Willard. “I’ll have nothing to do with you!”

She snatched away the dress which Evelyn was tightly grasping, and hurried out of the room.

Ellen assisted me in lifting her sister from the ground—we placed her in a chair, and vainly endeavored to console her; she only shook her head and answered, “I deserve it! I could not hope that all the world would be like you! I have brought it on myself!”

“Mother’s got no more blood in her than a stone!—and she isn’t as full of feeling as a sucked egg. Don’t

mind her, Evy! She's too hard upon you — she don't take after me in that."

Evelyn turned her affectionate eyes upon her brother, and was sinking into a sad reverie, when I aroused her by saying: "We must return, Evelyn—I am going with you. What will Doctor Westley say when he hears that you have been out?"

"Let me stay here—let me stay with Richard!"

"That is impossible. Come, Ellen, you have acted very imprudently—we must return."

I threw an appearance of haste into my manner which shortened the adieus of the sisters and brother; and before the two former had time to reflect, they were seated in the carriage and on their way to Nancy's dwelling.

Upon our arrival, we found Amy questioning Nancy, and in great distress at Evelyn's disappearance. I consigned the latter to the care of her friend, and drew Ellen aside to enquire in what manner she had been apprised of her brother's accident.

"Billy read an account of the whole affair in the *Herald*," replied Ellen, "and unceremoniously ran into Evelyn's room to ask if *the Mr. Willard* was any relation of mine. Evelyn became terribly agitated when she heard what Billy said, and I am afraid that I was not as self-possessed as I should have been. At Evelyn's entreaty, Billy read the account aloud, and then she persisted in going to Richard. I denied her for a long time, but it only made her worse, and I was forced to yield."

I left Ellen with her sister, and returned home, for I am ill at ease when absent from Blanche.

Before Mr. Willard retired this evening, I gave him a brief history of the day's occurrences. He was not until that moment aware of Evelyn's existence. The kind-hearted man was completely overcome; but his feelings towards his erring daughter were all of compassion—not of anger. He desired to see her; and to-morrow, if Evelyn is sufficiently recovered, his request will be granted.

The night is advancing, or rather morning is approaching, and I lay by my pen to seek a few hours' slumber.

Good night!—happier dreams visit your soft couch than are likely to pay their devoirs to my hard one. They will not find it difficult to give a lasting distaste for home-made sofas!

CHAPTER XIX.

“But good, my Lord, I am not used to waiting.”

From Hubert Damoreau to Frederick Ruthven.

April 2d.

THE plague take all dilatory letter-posts, and all American postmasters! The latter are the most neglectful set of scapegraces who ever cursed a free country by keeping their heads out of a noose!

Your letter, dear Fred, (if you wrote, and you *must have written*.) in answer to mine, never reached me. I should have heard from you five days ago, and here I am yet, in a state of the most unendurable suspense, taking lessons of Patience. I make my daily calls at the post-office as regularly as a monk says his aves; and walk away again with the visage of a Monsieur Mallet. I was half resolved to look upon you as *hors de combat*—done for—and defunct; and entertained some thoughts of buying sables, when J. D. Z. informed me that he saw you three days ago at Washington.

Come, Fred, stand by an old friend when you see him plunged up to the shoulders in the Slough of Despond, and write to me by return of mail. I find that in *one* respect I have no affinity to the cameleon—or is it a fabulous conceit that that praiseworthy reptile lives upon air? Unless you make haste with that paltry loan men-

tioned in my last, I shall be obliged to solve all doubts upon this question by trying the experiment myself.

Why, man, do you suppose that there is any doubt of your re-imbusement? To-morrow was to have been my wedding-day! The deuce take the sex! But I will win Amy yet—though I can't promise to do it in twenty-four hours. My courtship will be a work of time, and I require funds to make the proper investments, in bouquets, bijouterie, &c., to lay a foundation for *securing the capital*. True, I have met with one or two rebuffs from the fair icicle, but *nil desperandum* is my motto, and success invariably crowns the dauntless. Common men are discouraged by obstacles; but put a barrier in the way of a man of energetic will, and you only double his power.

Æolus has unkenneled all his ill winds and loosed them upon me for the last two weeks: I have withstood a perfect tempest and hurricane of disasters—not a zephyr that blew any good! Twice I have fallen into the hands of the Philistines—but more of that when we meet. Then my ourang-outang “Dick” has grown vicious and shown his teeth. A few days ago I administered a quietus for his snarling in the shape of a bullet through his knee: I had not the conscience to aim any higher, for fear of doing the poor fool an injury. I was well aware that ~~the~~ fellow hardly knew the stock of a pistol from the bridge, or I should have followed Randolph's example, and appeared upon the ground in an ample robe de chambre, and given “Dick” an opportunity of showing his skill in searching out the substantials.

Until the affair is hushed up, you may suppose that it would be to my interest to leave New York, lest the authorities should be on our track; but until I hear from you, how am I to get away? There are some little impediments on the road which obstruct a free exit. I doubt my own talents for enacting the *Chevalier D'industrie*, and at present that appears the only *highway* open for gaining the “daily bread” of which I stand in need.

Jesting apart, dear Fred, I still hope to see you act

like a man—one whose soul does not lie within the compass of his purse-strings; and if it did, they should unclose to share the very principle of life itself with a needy friend.

The wheel is bearing me round again—we must shake hands at the bottom, or when I reach the top to which I am hastening, we—but threats are idle, and ungentlemanly: your answer to my letter has miscarried, therefore write again and speedily, to

Your distressed friend,

HUBERT DAMOREAU.

CHAPTER XXI.

“ True revenge
Is patient as the watchful alchemist,
Sagacious as the bloodhound on the scent,
Secret as Death !”

EPES SARGENT.

From Katerine Bolton to Elizabeth Montague.

April 21.

SAD were the tidings communicated to me this morning, through Mrs. Ashburton, whose little daughters are my most promising pupils. Mr. Merritt is preparing to sue for a divorce—and worse—Laura Hilson is pronounced, by the gossiping world, his Bride elect. Ah! Evelyn's chastening has indeed been severe; blow after blow falls upon her doomed head; but she no longer resists; her misery is too full of despair for her even to murmur. She asks but one thing more of this world—a grave! Her hopes are placed upon the next.

And Laura Hilson—how thoroughly successful have

been the evil machinations of this designing girl! We have every one in turn been instruments in her hands, and she has "played what stops she pleased" upon us all.

I questioned Dr. Westley a few days ago, and learnt that he had seen Miss Hilson lately; that he had, inadvertently, mentioned Ellen's devotion and mine to the unknown invalid—and that Laura, after many anxious enquiries, pronounced that the Doctor's patient was no other than Evelyn Merritt. By whom the anonymous letters were written is no longer a matter of doubt.

Evelyn's interview with her father must have been deeply affecting; but I was not present at their first meeting. Mr. Willard now sees his daughter regularly every day, but his wife remains inexorable.

Richard is convalescent, but unable to move his wounded limb. His impatience greatly retards his recovery, but Dr. R—— does not consider him in a dangerous state.

Mr. Elton continues to pay his daily visits to the house. I am busied with my school, and though we constantly pass each other in the entry, or meet at the door, and exchange a few common-place remarks, we have never once entered into conversation. Outwardly we are little more than strangers to each other.

Ellen tells me that Dan has been engaged as porter for a large mercantile establishment, and receives high wages. The poor man has partially recovered his sight, but still suffers. I also unexpectedly learnt that this situation was procured for him by Mr. Elton. Well may he be active in doing good; how else can he expiate the evil!

Netta daily becomes more serviceable, and Blanche has grown entirely useless. Her faculties are totally paralyzed. Tender and sincere is the compassion she excites: a single glance at her dejected countenance almost unfits me for the discharge of my duties. I am pursued by that troubled look—those mournful dark eyes, now gazing on vacancy, and now flashing with the wildness of insanity, are ever before me. Perhaps I have

him—I would—until there wasn't a sound place in his body!"

Again I turned to Mr. Elton, and falteringly enquired: "With whom did he fight?" I hardly know why I asked the question, for surely I could have answered it myself.

"With Colonel Damoreau," replied he.

At this moment the quick, laboring breath of somebody behind me attracted my attention. I turned round and beheld Blanche. She had stolen into the room, and was standing at the foot of the bed, grasping the post to support herself. Her large eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and her white and terrified face was turned towards Mr. Elton.

His perfect command over every feature was truly astonishing. He neither seemed to recognize, nor even to notice her. But when with a penetrating glance I looked at him again, he quietly added: "The Colonel escaped unhurt. Mr. Willard desired to fire a second time, but found himself unable to stand. The whole affair took place so hurriedly, that I think it probable we shall escape the investigation of the authorities. The penalty of duelling is exceedingly heavy in this state. I assure you that I used my utmost endeavours to prevent the meeting; and even when the parties were on the ground attempted to effect a reconciliation—but my efforts were thrown away."

"Who told you so?" exclaimed Richard boisterously. "Who told you they would be? But you wouldn't believe me. The d——! there's a twinge! Oh! the rascal! the scoundrel! the cowardly butter-fingered puppy! why couldn't he finish the thing while he was about it? The deceitful villain—to dare to call himself my friend too! If he'd have only befriended me with a speedy passage to the next world I could have forgiven him! Oh! fire and blazes—there's a twinge! Go it—go it—I can't stand this long—the game will soon be up with me!"

He endeavoured to turn upon his side, but failed; and

for some minutes lay groaning, as though in great agony.

When he again spoke, it was to me, and in a much feebler tone. "I shan't stand it long, Miss Kitty—I shall kick the bucket soon! But it's no matter—I wouldn't give a rush to live now. Miss Kitty, come closer—I didn't mean to call you an *old woman*, Miss Kitty—don't remember it, and don't bear me any spite. But come nearer—nearer——"

I bent over him, and then he whispered, "Is she dead? Poor Evy! Poor Evy! Is it all over with her?"

"No, she only fainted."

For an instant his countenance kindled, but it quickly grew gloomy again—and he muttered, "I'm sorry for it—sorry for it—she couldn't do better than die. The world's not worth living in now—I wouldn't take a lease of the whole globe for a gift."

Netta's return with Dr. R——, who fortunately resides in our neighbourhood, precluded all further conversation.

Dr. R. pronounced that the ball had lodged just beneath the knee-pan, and it was necessary that the bullet should be extracted.

As my services were not required, I left the room before the operation commenced, leading Blanche. Mrs. Willard followed us; the feelings of maternity were not sufficiently strong to attach her to the side of her son in his hour of suffering.

We were joined by Mr. Elton as soon as the operation was at an end. It had been a very painful one, and Richard had fainted twice from exhaustion.

"You will permit me to share your labors in attending upon your son?" said he to Mrs. Willard.

"We are very much obliged to you," she replied courteously.

Mr. Elton glanced at me as though to ask, "Will you also make me welcome?"

I replied to his look by a distant bow, and left the room.

Last evening Ellen did not return home! Richard

neglected her—if so, she must command more of my time: my thoughts she cannot more engross.

* * * * *

April 31.

To-day Amy was to have become a wife! I called for her on my way to Nancy's this afternoon, for she had promised to accompany me. She must have passed a sleepless night and sorrowful day, for her eyes were heavy, and the smile with which she greeted me, looked as though it should have been followed by a tear.

Her health is still so delicate that this bracing air withers rather than invigorates. Carefully and tenderly over her gentle bosom had I pinned her fur tippet; we were almost ready to sally forth, when a small package was placed in Amy's hands. Curiosity was instantly on the alert; we opened it together. It contained a magnificent bridal veil—a wedding gift from one of Amy's uncles, residing in Maine. Although he had not lately heard from his niece, the idea that her nuptials might not take place, had never entered into the head of the simple-hearted old man.

Amy glanced at the veil which I was unfolding thoughtfully, descanting as I did so upon the richness of the embroidery. With a trembling hand, she took it from mine, laid it on the table, and turning away, said: "Let us go to Evelyn—she—she expects us."

In spite of her wonderful self-control, Amy could not speak calmly; she appeared to be suffocating.

In passing out of the room we encountered Mrs. Ellwell; Amy pointed to the veil, and said more composedly: "From Uncle; lay it aside mother, dear."

Mrs. Ellwell pressed her child to her swelling bosom and burst into tears. A few words—a very few words Amy whispered in her mother's ear, and then taking my arm, for she needed support, we left the house together.

Talk of heroism in the soldier who braves death amidst the exciting combat of the battle-field! Far more heroic is a woman's calm endurance of a weary life!

* * * * *

April 4th.

The first words that greeted me on reaching home yesterday, were spoken by Mrs. Willard, whose tones daily grew shriller. "Your pretty favorite, Blanche, has disappeared! Netta wanted to search for her, but that I forbid; there is too much work to be done for the servants to be gadding about the streets all day. Your's is a finely regulated household, to be sure!"

"How long has she been gone?" I enquired abruptly.

"I'm sure I don't know—a couple of hours or more."

Without speaking another word I hastened from the house in pursuit of Blanche, and taking Chance as my guide. It was already dusk, and fortunately I met Mr. Willard returning from his counting-room. He kindly and willingly offered to aid me in my search.

We walked straight on, almost too much alarmed to converse, but every once and awhile indulging in some unconnected and unmeaning observation, as though to persuade ourselves that we felt perfectly calm. Scarcely had we reached Prince street before I observed a crowd, or rather *mob*, gathering at a short distance in advance of us. In another moment a young girl rushed by and disappeared. She wore neither hood nor shawl. The dark hair partially loosened, and streaming in the wind, entirely concealed her face. One arm was extended as she ran, and she grasped something in her hand, which, in the rapidity of her flight, I could not distinguish.

"Was not that Blanche?" asked Mr. Willard, turning to look after her.

"No—yes, perhaps it was," I replied, but very doubtfully.

"Had we not better return then?"

A feeling stronger than mere curiosity made answer: "Let us first see what is the matter here. It might not have been Blanche. At all events let us discover why this crowd has gathered."

While I spoke, the throng parted. Several men were bearing between them a person either seriously wounded or otherwise injured. We took refuge upon the steps of a druggist's shop. As the men drew nearer, followed by

the mob, we caught the sound of the most fearful imprecations, mingled with groans, and ever and anon a savage yell, apparently wrung forth by the most intense agony. These curses, groans, and yells proceeded from the injured man. My limbs shook so violently that I caught hold of Mr. Willard for support. I dreaded to look; the sound of that voice was so familiar! Nearer and nearer came the men. Mr. Willard, now greatly excited, pressed forward unconsciously drawing me with him. Oh! what a horrible spectacle met our startled eyes! In the arms of the three men lay a miserable wretch whom we had known too well; for we recognized him in spite of his frightful transformation. I can hardly describe to you his appearance, the glance which I took was so hasty, and I had not courage to look again. His face was blistered, scorched, and mangled as though some unquenchable flame had eaten to the very bone. One eye was entirely closed, and appeared to me as though it had been burnt from its socket; his magnificent forehead was indented by deep scarlet ridges, the glossy black hair that once clustered so gracefully about it, had been torn away by his own frantic hands; his lips—but I spare you details so terrible. It was Colonel Damoreau; but Colonel Damoreau forever robbed of the weapons of the demi-god Alcides.

Mr. Willard shrank away, muttering, "An ugly business! an ugly business that!" Many of the throng who could press near enough to behold the face of the miserable man drew back in horror, and he was soon borne into the apothecary's shop.

"Home, home!" was all that I could say, and homeward we hurried.

Netta opened the door for us. "Blanche!" I ejaculated.

"Oh! come to her quickly!" answered the frightened child, preceding me as I ran up stairs.

In her chamber, crouching in the farthest corner, and moaning, and muttering unintelligible words, sat Blanche. I approached and accosted her gently. She stretched out her right hand towards me; it held a bottle labelled

with the word "vitriol;" she seemed unconscious of any pain, yet that hand was blistered and burnt, and her clothes were scorched in many places by the consuming liquid.

"Oh! Blanche, what have you done?"

"Both vows! I have kept both vows! Father, thou art avenged! Where is he? Oh! if you had seen him; his eyes; they will never shine lovingly again; their basilisk light is quenched! His lips, they cannot betray now. Look! it is emptied!" she dropped the bottle as she spoke.

I was speechless, powerless with awe.

For the first time Blanche now seemed to experience acute suffering from her hand. Uttering a sharp cry, she held it towards me with the significant action of a child seeking relief. The flesh was seriously burnt, and part of the hand looked swollen, and part seemed strangely shrivelled.

The simple remedies which I have found efficacious in cases of ordinary burns were applied, but gave no relief, she grew wild with pain; wilder I should have said, for she was frantic before.

Dr. R. examined the hand, and after some hours of agony, his prescriptions ameliorated her sufferings.

It was then that her madness, for reason was now wholly dethroned, took a different shape. She wrung her hands, and wept, and tossed about her arms, muttering; "Send it away! Shut it out! Do not let it stare at me so, will you? What a frightful face! Who did it? Not I--I tell you I loved him; I would lay down my life for him. Who did it? Do not let it scowl at me so? It has no eyes; flames of fire dart out from the hollow sockets; take it away; take it away; they burn me!"

I tried to dissipate this afflicting vision by soothing words; and she turned towards me with a vacant gaze, and said: "Bring my father, will you? Tell him that Hubert is here, and we are to be married to-day. Tell him I am innocent; it was all a foolish dream, we are to be married. Go bring him; I will never leave him again,

and we shall be so happy! Do not cross the grave-yard as you go; my mother lies there; I did not kill *her*; let her rest!"

Raving thus frantically, the wretched creature passed the night; morning finds her too exhausted to speak, and yet not more composed.

It was Colonel Damoreau then, who caused the misery of this misguided girl! And Mr. Elton—they were in Charleston at the same time; she might have seen them together, and recognized Ernest as his friend. How blind have I been! Who is not blind that trusts to *appearances*?"

Dreadful yesterday! When shall I forget its horrors? That yesterday was to have been the bridal of Colonel Damoreau!

CHAPTER XXI.

"'T is long, my Lord, since we have met alone,
And with what different feelings do we meet
To those we knew in happier hours long past!"

JAMES.

From the Same to the Same.

April 6th.

To become conscious of a fault—to acknowledge—to expiate it—they should all be one, should they not?—or following one another in such united succession that, to the mind, they seem but one continuous act? Why, then, should womanly shame cry out against the avowal which generosity and affection are mentally framing into words? A certain philosopher would explain this paradox by repeating that "women are made up of *contradictions*." Deny it as we may, he was a wise man who came to that conclusion.

"How is Blanche?" kindly enquired Mr. Elton, as I joined him in the parlor last evening.

"No better; she alternately sinks into a state of stupor, and is roused into one of phrenzy."

Mr. Elton heard my reply, acknowledged it with a sigh and a look of condolence, and then took up a newspaper that was lying upon the table.

As for me, I am sure I do not exactly know what I did; but I believe that after fidgeting about the room for a minute or two, I sat down to my work. The thread knotted and twirled at every stitch, the needle grew rusty, and the strawberry emery cushion which I held between my finger and thumb, had lost its cleansing powers.

"Mr. Elton ——" he looked up from his paper, and I punctured the strawberry with amazing rapidity, thinking to myself all the time "why *are* men so stupid?"

"Mr. Elton—hem!" I wondered what could have made my throat so husky. He still looked enquiringly at me, and I finished my sentence by saying, "Will you ring for a glass of water?"

Netta answered the summons—the water was brought and drunk—I had laid by my work, and Mr. Elton had dropped his fascinating newspaper, that dangerous rival of woman. When I saw it fall, I felt as though some powerful adversary had been thrust out of the way.

"Mr. Elton," I commenced a third time, "will you pardon me, but——"

My inexplicable confusion surprised Mr. Elton. It was probably the unwonted courtesy of my manner which induced him to reply:

"It is I only who should sue for pardon. For what can you desire forgiveness?"

"For——it is difficult to confess one's own blindness and injustice—for having harbored an injurious thought—for having mistaken you for Colonel Damoreau, and for having regarded you as the cause of Blanche's misery."

Oh! what an exquisite sensation of relief filled my mind when I had forced out these words!

“Can it be possible! Your coldness, then — your strange reserve — and which I thought sprang from indifference — may I attribute them to another origin? And—”

But why repeat his words, when neither tone nor look can be described? Nor will I give you my answer; you are not so dull as to be unable to divine it. Heaven has permitted the dream of youth to be realized when youth has fled; and I may say with the poet:

“That happiness awhile foregone
Is riches well laid out, a usury
Doubled, then coming back.”

It is not the blooming girl and the enthusiastic youth who hand in hand are commencing life's journey together. But those hands will not be less fondly knit, nor will their feet less firmly tread the short remainder of the route, because sorrow has chastened and experience strengthened their hearts.

I am anticipating — it is not all promised fruit that ripens — not until Evelyn is restored — not until Blanche no longer needs my care, and Ellen is re-established in her school — not until then may I dwell upon the fulfilment of my own happiness!

* * * * *

Evelyn has conceived a strong desire to behold her husband again. To convince her of the impracticability of such an interview, is an ungracious task.

“When I think how considerate, how kind has been every act of his life towards me —” she this morning remarked — “when I remember my own ingratitude, my disregard of his happiness — the unpardonable injuries I have done him — I feel as though it would at least be some relief to confess my own degradation; it would be some consolation to listen to his reproaches.”

We have concealed from her the terrible retribution with which Colonel Damoreau has been visited; but I now thought it expedient to communicate that Mr. Merritt was instituting proceedings preparatory to suing for a divorce, and that Laura Hilson was reported to be his affianced bride.

Evelyn's cheek paled and crimsoned again, as she replied: "He does well—I would have besought him myself to obtain his freedom, and never more to remember me or the misery I have occasioned him! But Laura Hilson—if he had chosen any other bride, one worthy of him, I should have died content. Oh! Miss Katerine, when I had the right, I neither warmly loved, nor truly appreciated Walter; and now that I should not dare to think of him—now he has grown inexpressibly dear to me!"

{ A strange contradiction this, and yet I believe that Evelyn is not singular in her feelings, and that she fully exemplifies the incomprehensible nature of the sex. }

I made some slight attempt to dissuade her from seeking an interview with her husband, but she silenced me by saying: "I must! indeed I *must!* I could not rest, I could not die in peace, until I had seen him."

A short time afterwards she placed a letter in my hand, bidding me to read and then despatch it to Mr. Merritt. Under existing circumstances, could it be considered a breach of confidence if I enclosed you a copy?

From Evelyn to Mr. Merritt.

"By what name shall I call you, now that my own crimes have deprived you of the title which I was unable to appreciate? I have violated every tie, but terrible has been the voice of retributive justice. I never deserved to be your wife, and what am I now? Walter, grant me one request! I ask it in the name of that parted angel who awaits you in the land of joy—who will bless you, and may never be permitted to cast even a pitying glance upon me. Grant me one more interview! Let me carry the remembrance of your last words, even though they be reproaches, to the couch of death. God, in his mercy, will not greatly prolong my wretched existence. Let me behold you once again, and then may you for ever forget one so hopeless and lost as

EVELYN."

CHAPTER XXII.

“ Within my bosom there are thoughts
Of happier days than these; and softness steals
Upon the steps of recollected love
And turns revenge to weakness.”

Blanche of Navarre.

From the Same to the Same.

April 7th.

EVELYN wept for hours over the letter which I this morning laid before her. That letter was from her husband, and every word in those well-known characters inflicted a double pang. She sat with her eyes fixed upon the open letter, which lay upon her lap, and her tears raining fast and thick upon it, though their lids never closed. Ellen and I made no attempt to disturb this salutary outburst of penitent grief. Only once Evelyn turned to us, and then she said in an almost inarticulate voice: “I would not dare press my lips to it—I have lost the right—it would seem like polluting with my touch the hand that wrote!”

The letter was as follows:

From Mr. Merritt to Evelyn.

April 7th.

“ God forgive you, Evelyn! The hopes and joys of my whole existence were centred in you, and you have annihilated them! I lived upon the breath of the world’s good repute, and you have covered me with shame! God forgive you! I am too utterly miserable to think of reproaches. } ”

“Of what avail would be the interview which you de-

sire? Could it blanch your sullied fame, or reanimate my crushed spirit? Yet come—I have ever been weak when you were concerned—and, I blush at the avowal, in spite of your dishonor I would behold you once more, Evelyn!

“But we may not meet openly, for the world must not know my weakness. Come to me at five this afternoon at my counting-house. You will find me in the inner chamber—the clerks shall all be absent, and the street at that hour is generally deserted.

“Evelyn! Evelyn! what a return have you made for my illimitable love! Though you held not your own honor dear—oh! was not some sacrifice due to him whose soul harbored no thought save to promote your happiness?

“I spare you my reproaches: if your wretchedness bears any resemblance to mine, you need them not. Come to me at the appointed hour. Despoiled of the priceless crown of purity, fallen and disgraced, still let me see you!

WALTER MERRITT.

* * * * *

April 8th.

The carriage that was to bear Evelyn to her husband stood at the door. The clock had struck the appointed hour—still Evelyn lingered. Her strength had departed—she lacked courage to meet him whom she had irremediably wronged!

“The hour has passed, Evelyn,” I whispered in her ear.

She looked at me with a terrified glance, and then was seized with a sudden fit of shivering.

“Oh! I cannot—I dare not!”

“But Walter awaits you,” I answered reproachfully.

“Does he?” she asked, as though uncertain that I had spoken correctly. “No, no—he waits no longer! Ah, what a frightful vision! I saw it before—it has frozen my blood—but it is not—could it be real?”

“Nay, Evelyn, arouse yourself! you are made the

sport of your own disordered and excited imagination. Remember that the hours are long to those who expect, and Walter is now listening to every distant step, and hoping that it may be yours."

"So he is—but I am very feeble. At this moment I could not bear to hear his reproaches—they would kill me!"

"Have not you yourself sought this interview? Trust me, Evelyn, he will not reproach you."

"Will he pardon?" she asked abruptly, in an almost hopeful tone.

I could not venture to answer that question, and merely said, "It is very late—are you not ready?"

"Yes—but come with me!"

I complied with her request; and after assisting her into the carriage, for she was quite weak, I took my seat beside her. During our ride, I tried to reassure and inspire her with courage; nor did I fail to remind her of how anxiously she had desired to behold her husband.

The carriage stopped. Evelyn had become perfectly calm: she drew her veil over her thin and pallid face, saying, "It would shock him if he saw at once how much I was changed!" and then with a firm step descended from the carriage.

I feared for her, though I was now far more agitated than she, and encircling her waist with my arm, we entered Mr. Merritt's counting-room together. Every desk was empty, not even a porter was stationed in the deserted apartment. We passed rapidly through the room, but at the door of the inner chamber Evelyn stopped, and caught hold of my hand just as I placed it upon the lock. Well might thronging memories cause her to pause, for that door had but too often flown open to welcome her!

In another moment she herself turned the handle, and we found ourselves in an apartment which Mr. Merritt in happier days had furnished with the most extravagant elegance. We at first thought that the room was vacant, for there were no signs of life and motion. The

fire in the grate had died out, and the deepening twilight shed but a sombre and uncertain light over the dim objects around us. We stood motionless, listening for Mr. Merritt's voice, and straining our eyes to pierce the gloom—nothing was audible but the quick gasping of Evelyn's breath, nothing visible but the luxurious and empty chairs near us.

I was about to speak, when the rising moon, with her pure cold light, faintly illumined the chamber. Upon a sofa, in a remote part of the room, lay the figure of a man, wrapped in a large cloak. His back was turned towards us, but Evelyn instantly recognized the form of her husband—and the same thought crossed her mind that entered mine. Tired with watching and expectation, he had fallen into a heavy slumber.

Evelyn withdrew her arm, and with a faltering step advanced towards him. "Walter!" she exclaimed—but he awoke not.

"Walter!" she added in a louder but even more thrilling voice. "I am here—not to implore your pardon—that could not be—but to behold you once more—to claim at least your pity when you see the fearful changes that suffering and sin have wrought!"

Still no answer.

Evelyn drew nearer and lightly placed her hand upon the arm of her husband, but drew it back with a terrific, heart-harrowing shriek—she had touched a corpse!

Regardless of her safety, I rushed from the chamber. To whom or how I gave the alarm I know not; but when I re-entered the room several men, one of them bearing a light, followed me.

To the latest day of my life I shall never forget the scene which then presented itself to my eyes; Evelyn was lying stretched half across the body of her husband, her beautiful head rested upon his bosom, and one arm was tightly wound about his neck. We raised her up; happily for her she had fallen into a state of insensibility. In lifting her from her recumbent position the cloak was drawn from Mr. Merritt's shoulders. One hand hung lifeless over the side of the sofa, the other grasped a pis-

tol which was pressed upon his heart. He had died by his own hand!

I would have hurried Evelyn away, but she revived, and springing from my arms again, threw herself upon the corpse. Even in death there was a sorrowful expression upon that ghastly, upturned face; and the sharp cheek-bones and sunken cheeks, the whitening hairs, the fallen jaw and livid lips, were to me full of terror. What must they have been to Evelyn!

She clung to the lifeless body, abstractedly pushing the hair from the icy forehead, with her finger closing the lids of the glazed eyes, and placing her cheek to the open mouth that she might feel the perhaps lingering breath. The only words she uttered were: "This too! There was only this wanting; it is my work! Oh, God! Oh, God! visit his sin upon me!"

The room was now filling with strangers, and the coroner had been summoned. I endeavoured to draw Evelyn away, but one arm was still twined about her husband, and my words fell upon an unconscious ear.

A gentleman, whose face was familiar, stood near me. He saw my distress, and, without hesitation, lifted Evelyn in his powful arms and bore her to the carriage. For an instant she struggled, and then her limbs relaxed—she had again become insensible.

As I was following her from the room, I beheld upon the table where the light was placed, a folded letter. It was addressed to Evelyn: the hand-writing was that of her husband: I took it up and carried it away.

Have you never seemed to yourself as though you were moving about in a dream? It was thus that I felt through that long evening and weary night, as I mechanically aided Ellen and Amy in administering to the bereaved and wretched Evelyn. Consciousness was speedily restored, but her whole appearance and demeanor had changed. The wildest burst of grief were better than this mute, agonizing despair: to arouse her from her stupor, I showed her Mr. Merritt's letter. The last words his hand had traced were as follows:

"From Mr. Merritt to Evelyn.

"The struggle is too great; I can no longer endure it; and, Heaven pardon me! I seek a criminal release!

"To behold you, Evelyn, would be to forgive. I know my own infirmity; I love you in spite of your shame! I would open my arms to receive you, though your name were ten times as blackened! But this cannot be. How could I meet the eyes of the world with a dishonored wife pressed to my heart?

"I must fly from myself and from you, for your image gives me no peace. Evelyn! too madly loved—too hopelessly ruined—your name will be the last upon my lips—thine and that of our child. Farewell!

"Yours in death as through life,

"WALTER."

The effect of this letter upon Evelyn was not so marked as I had supposed it would be. She read and re-read, and retained it in her hand, but never wept—the shock had been too great for tears.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“The world is empty, the heart will die,
 There ’s nothing to wish for beneath the sky!
 Thou Holy One call thy child away!
 I’ve lived and loved—and that was to-day,
 Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.”

The Piccolimini—SCHILLER.

From the Same to the Same.

April 9th.

I MARVEL at myself that at this moment I can write to you; but long habit has taught me to seek refuge from thought in my pen. And perhaps there is selfishness in this as in too many of our acts, for the sympathy I seek steals away the poignancy of grief.

I was laving the hand of Blanche this morning with a soothing ointment, and endeavouring to make her recognize my voice and face, when Ellen joined me.

She was unusually agitated, and could hardly articulate the words, “Come to Evelyn—she has expressed a wish to see you!”

I instantly complied with her request, consigning Blanche to the care of Netta.

“Oh! it was cruel—too cruel! Mother has no heart!” exclaimed Ellen, when we issued into the street. “I have entreated her upon my knees, yet she will not come to Evelyn. And Evelyn implored me to bring her. It was too cruel—too heartless—too——”

“But it is of your mother you speak!”

Ellen sighed without attempting to finish her sentence, but the sigh seemed to say, “I would it were not!”

Evelyn had not left her bed since the hour when she

had been torn from the corpse of her husband. The last fearful blow had been struck home! We found Amy by her side. And, like the guardian angels that hovered about her unseen, infusing peace into her stricken soul, so Amy whispered words of comfort in her ear.

"Mother!" faintly murmured Evelyn, as she turned her eyes enquiringly towards us.

Ellen shook her head sadly, for her tongue refused to say, "She would not come."

A sigh, a gentle, not reproachful sigh, escaped from Evelyn's lips, and she stretched out her hand to me. I approached her; her tone was so low, and the quickness of her breath rendered her voice so broken that I could hardly distinguish her words. "Miss Katherine—God—you taught me—I have no fear—when we meet—we meet——" Her utterance was impeded, but a smile full of hope illumined her countenance, and she tenderly, though feebly, returned the kiss which I imprinted upon her pale lips.

I drew back to give place to Ellen, who was tremblingly pressing towards her sister. Again Evelyn made an effort to speak, and she gasped out, "Bless you! He will bless you! Tell my father—I am going—Walter—Lilla!"

We could not conceal from ourselves that her last moment was approaching; the cold dew of Death was already on her brow; his touch had already sealed her lips and dimmed her eyes. Amy bent anxiously forward to claim one last word, one look of recognition from the beloved one she had watched with such tireless tenderness—but it was too late—Evelyn's utterance was gone—the world was fading from her sight.

There was something awful in this gradual separation of the spirit from its mortal garment—too awful for tears or loud lamentations. In perfect silence we stood around the couch of Death, watching the slightest changes wrought by the Destroyer's hand.

The lids drooped over those beautiful eyes, yet closed not entirely, for through the silken lashes the deeply blue orbs were still visible. Evelyn's breath, which for some

moments came hurriedly and laboriously forth, grew slower—at short intervals appeared to cease, and then was gently drawn again. Suddenly a light irradiated the inanimate countenance, robing it in an unearthly beauty; a heavenly smile parted the lips; the eyes shone brightly as with an upward look they opened; a slight shivering ran through the stiffening frame; a gasp, a faint sigh; the jaw fell, the eyes glazed, the spirit was freed! Had it not caught a glimpse of Heaven in that parting moment? Was it not that transient look which left an angelic smile imprinted even upon the soulless, valueless clay?

And Evelyn is no longer of this world. And many, who in the days of her pride courted and caressed, and it may be some who truly loved her, will never mention her name without a blush or a sneer. Yet amongst the angels of a juster land her errors are pardoned, and she lives for immortal, and eternally increasing joy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“There is a love which forms
In early days, lives on through silent years.”

From Katerine Elton to Elizabeth Montague.

New York, April 20th, 18—.

To hear from me but once in a whole year, and that once through the expressive medium of two highly glazed bits of pasteboard with a name embedded in flourishes on each; and a shabby little package tied with tell-tale white ribbon—truly my gentle friend, your complaints are not causeless! I have been so long wedded to my pen, that the union could only be interrupted, and the

goose-quill discarded and divorced, to give place to another lord. The thousand little gossiping narrations, and sage reflections, and grave confessions which my communicative disposition induced me to impart to you, are now breathed in another not less attentive ear. She who gives not her perfect confidence with her hand, is not spiritually wedded!

Believe me that I willingly gratify your curiosity, in affording you some further information respecting the friends whose histories you have followed through two eventful years. It is like La Fontaine's transformed tabby returning to her former cat-like vagaries.

Of Ellen first—Ellen who ranks first in our hearts, and whose life of love ensures her an exalted rank in eternity. She is still dwelling in her city cottage, her school rapidly increases, and her thoughts are engrossed by every active employment which has use and God for its end. And this is the Ellen who three years ago found no beauty in this affluent world, no sweetness in life, no hope in the future, no consolation in the past! It is the pure motive of her acts which lends them their loveliness. Did she look for gratitude or praise as the meed of kindnesses performed, then would she be but a *capital calculator* at the best. Her charity is for charity's sake, her goodness for the sake of good, and therefore do her deeds send up a grateful incense to Heaven.

Yet, is she faultless, this same exemplary fair one? By no means: she has never forgotten her mother's cruelty to Evelyn: a marked coldness exists between Mrs. Willard and her sole remaining daughter, and Ellen is always constrained and uneasy in her mother's presence. Were Ellen's nature wholly pure, she could pity and pardon the unjust, and tolerate even the heartless.

The bright October morning, when I took leave of the little cottage in Twenty-seventh street, to enter my own more ostentatious dwelling, would have been a sad one for Ellen, had she not forgotten all selfish regret in sympathizing with my joy. And happily our residences are situated so near each other that my windows overlook

her garden, and we have established a set of telegraphic signs that form a pleasant chain of communication.

I not unfrequently pay a visit to Ellen's school-room, and my quondam little favorite, Annie, ever loudly testifies her delight on beholding her early instructress. It is a true pleasure to steal upon Ellen unawares—the atmosphere about her breathes of such perfect peace and order—she is so thoroughly contented with her lot—her school is so judiciously regulated, her house so neat, her garden, like her soul, so full of daily springing beauty!

That tiny, tenderly tended garden reminds me of the old flower-woman. I must say a word of her *en passant*. Of a fine afternoon in spring or summer, you could not stroll down Broadway without noticing her and her floral offerings. But the old woman no longer crouches beneath her tattered umbrella. The proceeds of Ellen's bouquets have procured her a comfortable looking sort of wooden cupboard, and there the smiling old dame sits ensconced amongst her flowers. It does the heart good to look upon her, for one might well fancy that she was rejuvenated by the fresh blossoms sending forth their perfume around her withered form. Her nosegays too, are worth more than a passing glance, for they are daily supplied from Ellen's garden, and not unfrequently from the green-houses of some of her pupils; for many of those, following in the steps of their beloved instructress, find their chief delight in delighting others.

Of Mrs. Willard, what shall I say, except that she is *Mrs. Willard* still? She has lately been seized by an all engrossing horror of growing old. And in truth, her uneasy fretfulness and constant spleen, have greatly contributed to wither and wrinkle her hitherto smooth skin. Every softening soap, cosmetic wash, and *eau de beauté* advertised in the papers, is sure to find its mysterious way to her toilette-table. She passes her days in dyeing her hair, darkening her brows and lashes, setting forth her remaining charms, and in bewailing and concealing the departed ones. And all this vexation, pain and toil, is endured for the sake of repairing the worn-out, clay-sprung garment, which can last her but a few years a

the best; while the beauties of the spirit which must serve her to eternity, are despised and neglected. I would as soon think of patching up a thread-bare dress, while a new one of untarnished splendor awaited my finishing touches.

Formerly she attired herself in excellent taste, but as she grows older she dresses younger, affecting the coquetish airs and unformed manners of youth. And she really persuades herself that this shallow cheat is undiscovered by the politely blinded world. Every day, as soon as her toilette is completed, she sallies forth and takes her station in my parlor, for the purpose of entertaining my guests, or rather of astonishing them by her wonderful volubility, and self-derived importance. I look upon her as one of those necessary incumbrances to which good-nature must uncomplainingly give house-room. The foil of earnestness and sincerity—a shadow in the bright picture of life! Death to her is a sound so terrible that she almost faints at the mere mention of the word—and yet she too must die!

Poor Richard—"Dick" he still calls himself; he is limping on crutches through the world, ludicrously comparing himself to the "*Diable Boiteux*," and ever talking of independent fellows, of his country, his family, and his own astonishing intellectual powers. But "Richard is not himself," and I fear me, never will be again. He cannot speak of his favorite "Evy" without brushing his rough coat-sleeves across his eyes, and the action is always followed by an oath, and an observation that he "will pepper that rascally Colonel yet, if he catches him in *these diggin's* again."

Ever since the unfortunate duel, Richard has resided with his parents and sister. Mr. Elton has procured him a situation as clerk in the same mercantile establishment of which Mr. Willard is book-keeper. But Dick still persists in calling himself a *lawyer*, adding that he is reposing on his laurels, and takes up the present situation to look after the establishment and for the sake of obliging a friend. But he talks not as boisterously as

was his wont, and I should not wonder to see him grow "melancholy and gentlemanly" as Jacques himself.

Mr. Willard deserves the truly American title of a "Man well to do in the world." To Ellen, who first pointed out the veins of gold that ran unnoticed beneath his feet, the verdant spots in what was to him a desert, and who first taught him the value and beauty of existence, his devotion is unbounded. His prosperity yearly increases, and yet hardly keeps pace with his growing gratitude and content. Good man! he often comes in our way through his over-anxiety to be busy and obliging, but even haste could not thrust him aside without a smile and a word of thanks.

And Amy, the gentle-spirited, uncomplaining, but soul-stricken Amy, where is she? Too soon vanished the delusive star upon which she had fixed her worshipping gaze,—it fell! but her eyes were not less meekly, nor less steadily turned to that firmament beyond which a holier star was shining.

I mourn for the tender mother, and the fond old father, of whose lengthening days she is the Sun. For, as the autumn leaves blush when their glory must depart, so Nature in her feeble strife with Death has crimsoned Amy's cheek with the hectic hue that proclaims defeat. And in the fair girl's blue orbs there is a lustrous light that only illumines the eye when it takes its last farewell of earth.

And Blanche—the two victims of—Heaven pardon him!—they are withering side by side. Blanche has never recovered her reason, nor the use of the hand by which her vengeance was accomplished. I loved her tenderly, and would gladly have retained her with me, but to my entreaties Amy answered: "When I am gone, take my place, and be to her all that you have been. While I remain, I shall find a sad pleasure in watching over one so much more miserable than myself: you have many duties, mine are but too few."

Of Colonel Damoreau, I only know that he disappeared from the city soon after his accident. The papers for some time daily teemed with different accounts

of the terrible injury he had received, but all mention and even remembrance of him has long since died away. Where he has hidden his disfigured countenance seems no longer to be a matter of interest. Peace be with him! — the peace of which he has robbed so many without enriching himself.

Ah! Netta—rosy, roguish, industrious little Netta—Ellen's shadow and her right arm. Netta springs up and thrives like a weed, but her blossoms are those of the unconscious wild-flower, and it would not be difficult to recognize what hand had nourished the soil about this vigorous little daisy.

And Netta's parents—Dan has not entirely recovered his sight, but Mr. Elton has found him plenty of work, which is almost as good, and he has never broken the temperance pledge. Nancy—well, well, if she does not always follow the good way, it is not because the path is not often enough pointed out to her. There is a certain gentle hand that stretches itself forth to lead her into the road as often as she swerves aside, and it is to be hoped that one of these days she will learn to walk *straight ahead*.

And Billy? In this land of newspapers and cheap publications, newsboys form an important part of the population. Some who now carry literary bundles beneath their arms, will ride in their carriages before they die; and I see no reason why Billy himself may not be nominated as member of congress one of these days. Rise! rise! It matters not from what obscure pit a man may spring—if he has the talent, the energy, the will, he may still rise—the highest summit which America boasts, is not beyond the reach of its humblest-born citizen.

At present Billy looks forward to no greater glory than that of becoming a *Smasher* and the rival of Mark. Billy already expresses it as his opinion, that he knows when a book's worth the crying, and whether it's going off like hot cakes or cold, as well as the biggest-fisted Smasher of them all. I believe him—success to Billy the newsboy! The sturdy little fellow now prides himself upon his *honesty*, (thanks to Ellen,) as much as on

his *boxing*, and he is an honor to his profession. "Hurrah! for Billy!" cry his ragged young brethren, after he has been haranguing them during idle times at some street corner; and "Hurrah for Billy!" say I. May the newsboys ever find him "easy to *meet*,"* but hard to *beat*!"

And these are all in whose histories your interest has been awakened,—nay, there is one more—Laura Hilson. I cannot so well give you a portrait of her present life, as by repeating a conversation which took place between Ellen and myself this afternoon.

She had come to pass a sociable hour with me, and we were sitting by the window *idling* over our needles, and looking out into the broad avenue. As we chatted away, making our gossiping observations on the world at large, a splendid open barouche, with liveried footman and coachman, and drawn by two white horses, whirled by us. The barouche contained a lady, magnificently attired, and though it fled with such rapidity, we both recognized beneath the rich, white, Mechlin veil, the blooming features of Laura Hilson.

"What a superb equipage! Laura Hilson! Can it be possible? How came she there?" asked Ellen, all in one breath.

"I forgot to tell you," was my answer, "that I heard the other day that Miss Hilson was married."

"Married! To whom?"

"To a Southern planter of immense wealth, and quite an accomplished young man. I believe that his name is Ruthven, and he is said to have been a friend of Colonel Damoreau. Mr. Ruthven was travelling for pleasure, and in passing through New York found the principal hotels full, and took rooms at Fleecer's; he saw Laura—and—they are married! That is all that I know on the subject."

Ellen sat dejectedly musing for some time, and then looking at me with a sorrowful expression, said: "Does

* "Hard to *meet*" is a slang expression among these young gentlemen, intending to express "difficult to *surpass*."

it seem just in Divine Providence, who governs all things, that while the good are often bowed down by suffering, and die—sometimes in misery—such misery as we have witnessed—that a being wicked as Laura Hilson should arrive at the summit of her wishes, should be loaded with riches, and raised to a position which commands respect, if not adulation?"

"Can you not then conceive, dear Ellen," I replied, "that those very riches, that adulation, may be the bitterest curses, instead of blessings? Wealth and high station are blessings to those who prize them for the sake of ministering to others—they are blessings to those who look to some good use as the desirable end of riches. But what is opulence to such as regard self alone? Is it not a curse, since it makes them place their affections entirely upon worldly things, from which they must be parted? If it seduces their minds, and alienates their hearts from the contemplation of elevated subjects, is it not a curse? If it excites in them an uncontrollable desire for personal gratification, is it not a curse? Do not they themselves feel it a curse, when, loving it so devotedly, they remember that they cannot carry it away with them, and that the unconquerable tyrant, Death, may separate them at any hour from their treasures?"

"I admit the force of your argument," said Ellen, "and yet I would willingly believe that the wicked were punished on earth, and the good rewarded."

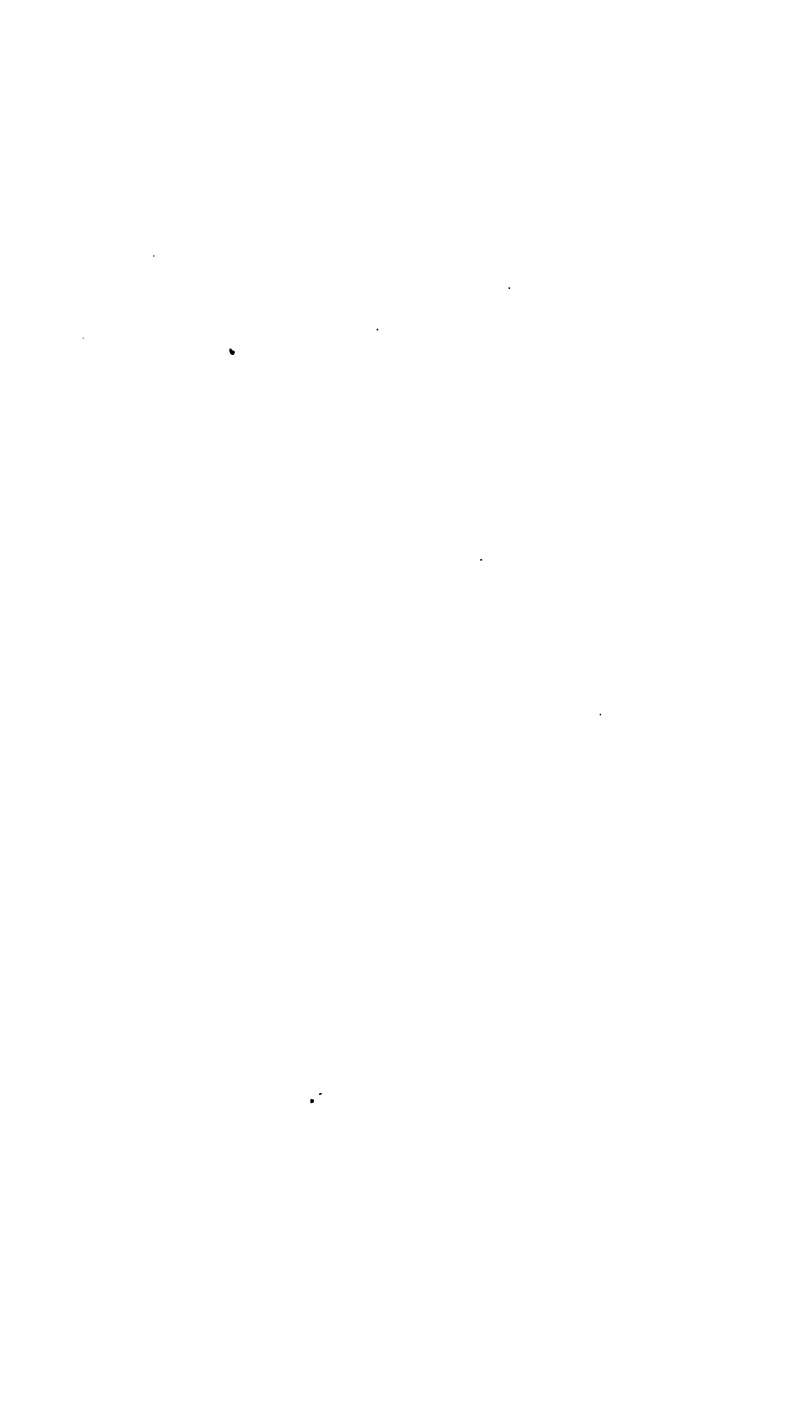
"And by balancing our accounts here, you would rob hereafter of half its sustaining consolations. If we found our Heaven in this world, we should hardly be willing to seek it in another, and——"

"Ah! now I see the short-sightedness of my own wishes," cried Ellen, interrupting me. "I would not for the universe be deprived of the perfect willingness to die which I now feel. Hereafter—yes, we must live for hereafter! It is the reference which our seeming blessings bear to our future state which should render them prized or valueless—true, very true!"

So ended our grave conversation, and with it ends this long letter, for which I am almost inclined to make the apologies of a school-girl—but forbear, when I remember your habitual leniency, and constitutional blindness to all that is defective.

THE END.







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